Enter into thy Closet:

OR, A

METHOD

AND

ORDER

FOR PRIVATE

DEVOTION.

WITH

AN APPENDIX

Concerning the Frequent and Holy Use

OF THE

LORDS SUPPER.

The Fifth Edition Revised, and fit Additions made by the Author.

London Printed for R. Bentley in Russelftreet in Covent-Garden, 1684. Enter inforthy Closet: A , 20 SHUBO TOP LORDS SUPPER

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OF THE

LORDS SUPPER.

Revised by the Author.

Is not this a brand pluckt out of the fire? Zech. 3. 2.

R. Bentley in Covent-Garden, and G. Wells in Se. Paul's Church-yard, 1584.

Fater into thy G A -100 and the state of Lindon Princelefer II. Some one in while m As reader in Grown and condiin Sec Production, when it speci

TO THE

Right Reverend Father in God,

SETH

Lord Bishop of Sarum.

Any very good Lord,

E who writ this, though
for many reasons he destred the World should
be ignorant of him, yet could
not content himself, it should be
ignorant it very much owes to
your Lordship both him, whoever
he is, and this his Book, whatever
it is: Him, in the care you have
ever exprest towards him; and it,
in that some discourse of yours,
bough but casual at Table, gave
A occasion

occasion to its composure (for the main,) and publication: Being publick, and having often now Seen the tight, it almost flatters its Author into an apprehension, That if the World continue in the little Sobriety and Devotion, which (alas!) a small part thereof at present wears, it may chance to live the longest of any thing be may do. At least he begs you'l think, when he inscrib'd it to you, that he thought it might: However, should be ever be blest with marble, he assures you'twill not suffice him, that he hath writ your Name in water. God preserve your Lordship, what you truly are, an Ornament to your Age and Country, a Bleffing to his Church, and a Refuge to the soberly Religious.

AN

ADMONITION

TO THE

READER.

As it stood in the former Editions.

THat it is the fashion to call an Epistle to the Reader, or, if it be somewhat longer, a Preface, the Author stiled an Admonition, or Advertisement to the Reader, that by amore unufual title he might the more furely

An Admonition

drawhim to read it, before he doth the Book.

And the first thing which he admonisheth thee of, Good Reader, is, that thou neither question nor scruple what judgment he is of, before thou hast confidered what he here faith: nor that, when thou shalt have read a little way into the book, thou make such conjectures of its Authors opinion, asto conclude the book fit only to be laid afide by thee, because he who writ it, may haply diffent from thee in some matters. He very little meddles with any

sto the Reader.

any matters here, in which it is likely that any fober Christian differts from him A difrehiling expresfron, or a Chapter should not be warrant enough to cheefor thy fentencing him this or that, and rejecting whatele he fays for thine and common good. Perhaps he may make mention of a Common-prayer-Book, or Holy-days, only to drawinthem, who will hear of no devotion which rejects thefe, but execrate it still as Fanatical) to the reading his Book, and thereby to a more ferious DVSI and.

An Admonition

and Christian use of those things, than what all are guilty of. Perhaps on the other side, he may be in goodearnest, and thinking them right Christian and useful, commend them to thy practice, and direct thee fo to use them, as that thou shalt by such use of them begin less to quarrel with them. Either delign ishonest, and it is, no matter whether it is which he hath, nor who, or what he is. He would only have theeto take him for a man of ferious and fober Principles, and one who would have

to the Reader.

have all that profess Christianity to be such also: (and fuch thou must either take him to be, or else, being that thou knowest him not, and so canst not know him to be otherwise, thou art uncharitable:) and as being fuch, that, which he endeavours here is to bring thee feriously upon thy knees before God, there to examin thine heart and actions according to that Christian Rule which indispensably enjoyns thee Charity, Meekness, Moderation, Peaceableness; and such sweet A 4

An Admonition

Virtues; which if thou do but use thy self to, thou wilt judge thy self no otherwise a Christian than as these Christian Graces are in thee, and receive as a new-born-Babe, the sincere milk of the doctrine of Godliness, come it to thee in what vessels soever.

Another thing, which he hath to advise thee of, is matter of direction in the use of this Book: in which case his desire to thee is, that thou wilt first read over the Tables, which are annexed to it, and mark the substance

to the Reader.

of what he there promifeth to treat of: That then, if thou resolve to make use of this method for thy devotion (and, the Author thinks thou wilt, if thou have the patience to consider it, and canst obtain leifure of thy self to practife it) that thou wilt read the Book once or twice over, and endeavour by attent confideration to understand it; and when thou hast once got the Book thus into thine head, the practice will foon grow easie (he is sure, at least, most sweet A 5

An Admonition

and bleffedly delightful.)
Be but perswaded to try
it one month or two, and
see if thou canst find in
thy heart to be so injurious to thine own felicity,
as to lay it aside again.

Somewhat too there should be said as to what is likely to be objected against the contents hereof. It may haply be conceived there are here some practices directed to in ordinary devotions, which are too high for every mans reach (as is meditating upon Scripture, in such sort as is here taught, endea-

to the Reader.

endeavouring the mortification of fin in fuch rational Methods, &c.) some circumstances too, as to the place of retirement, unnecessary, or above many mens conditions, &c. As to the former of which, the Authors answer is, that patterns of this nature must not be set too low, for that men are apt rather to aim under than over; that he thinks there is very little of practice here, by which a plain capacity may not understand somewhat, which he will conclude to be his duity,

duty, though it may be he reach not all in that case; and further both as to this and to the latter point supposed to be objected, that the higher matters and more curious circumstances are commended only to men of abilities, estates and leisure suitable: Let all go as high as they can, and their devotions will be fure to be more compleat, than if they had aimed Lower.

Now, which is all that shall be added, possibly some may think such Books

to the Reader.

Books as these needless at prefent, after so many extant in this kind already. Hereunto the Authors Apology might be, that the number of fuch Books is much at present lessened by those * mercyless dreadful flames out of which the fire of London. providence of God faved September. this Book, (when it was in a manner all printed off fave this Preface) that this preservation of it is some excuse for its appearance, and presage that it may not be altogether fruitles: But this being waved, that which was

An Admonition

his answer in the Preface; which those forementioned flames confumed, when the Book it felf efcaped, is, that he is not much read in English Books of this kind, and fo knows not what or how many like are extant; but that of those, which it hath been his lot to see, he knows none, which do more aim at the hitting the genius and humour of every mans devotion (be he of what judgment he will) than he hath done in this and that, be the Reader a conformable person,

to the Reader.

or any of the contrary perswasions, if he bebut ferious, and resolved not to reject the main, which he cannot but approve, for a page or two, which though he may not much brook, yet he can scarce be very angry with, the Author believes such a person will not think his pains to no purpose: However that in this hope he cannot but be confident, that the meer writing and publishing hereof will be a perpetual engagement to himself of a **spect**

An Admonition, &c.

spect life, as well as of more mature, regular and constant devotion; and that therefore, if in none other, yet in this respect, it comes not forth in vain: To which purpose he desires thee (good Reader) to help him with thy Prayers, as he hath endeavoured to help thee by the following advise.

The Second Are to

TABLE

O F THE TO

CONTENTS.

The First Part contains only a Preparatory Discourse and an Introduction to the rest.

CHAP. I.

OF the necessity of Privacy and those Christian duties which require it. pag. 1.

Chap. 2. Of the situation and furniture of their Closes who have choice.

Pag. 5. Chap.

The Table.

Chap. 3. Of most common entrance into the Clofet. pag. 8.

The Second Part treateth of folemn retirement to the Gloset, and daily Duties there.

Chap. 1. That who fo is a Person of leisure, ought daily twice in the day to retire into his Closet for devotion sake. pag. 13.

Chap. 2. Considerations to perswade to daily devotion and prayer in

private pag. 18.

Chap. 3. Of the Substance of every days Private devotion: to persons of leisure, Reading, Meditation,

and Prayer. pag. 33.

Chap. 4. Of reading the boly Scripture: the most edifying method and manner of reading it consulted of. pag. 37.

Chap: 5. Of Meditation, and the most edifying course in it. pag. 45.

Chap. 6. Of Prayer. First of its Substance and parts. pag. 63.

Chap.

The Table.

C hap. 7. Of the right manuer of Prayer. First of its inward manner. Some considerations to quicken to sincerity and heartiness in prayer. What graces are to be exercised

in each part of Prayer. pag. 69. Chap.8. Of the best outward manner of Prayer in fit postures and fit words. Of praying by Gift, and the inconveniences alledgable in this case against it. Of praying by Form and the inconveniences in this case alledgable against it. An accommodation and reconcilement of both. pag. 77.

Chap. 9. A form of Prayer made according to the former Accommodation, which may be used in mor-

ning Privacy. pag. 86. Chap. 10. A form of Prayer made as the other, which may be used in

evening privacy. pag 96.

Chap. 11. Some further directions touching the use of these prayers. Objections of want of time, or privacy sometimes, considered; And provision made in such cases. pag-AFIT 107 100 11 pleat privilette rel Elmi-civing, pag. 168x

of the richt matter of

The third part treateth of more folemn retirement into the Closet, upon Holydays and Sundays, and duties then and there.

Chap. I. That private devotions should be greater upon Holy-days than on wordinary days. The end of Festivals, and their vindication from abusiveness and cavels pag. 120. Chap. 2. What thereshould be of new

Chap. 2. What there should be of new -on the private devotions upon attoby-

Chap. 3. An Exemplification on Practice of the former Rules in Christmas day, with a fit Prayer to be added to ordinary prayers thereupon. pag. 130.

Chap. 4. An Exemplification of the fame rules in St. Stephens-day, with a prayer which may be used on any Saints day. pag. 151.

Chap. 5. Of what remains to compleat private Festival devotions, viz. Alms-giving. pag. 168.

Chap.

The Table

Chap 6. That the Lords day ought.
to be kept holy, and what the keeping it holy means. pag. 173.

Chap: 7: Of Preparation fon the Lords day. A preparatory prayer

thereto. pag. 177.

Chap. 8. Of the true manner of san-Etifying the Lords day. pag. 184.

Sect. 1. Before going to Church.
Sect. 2. Of secret devotion in the Gloset before going to Church.

Sect. 3. Of devotion in the Family before going to Church. A digression touching what the Devotion in the family is always to consist of.

Sect. 4. Of resorting to the Church. Sect. 5. Of due behaviour in the

Church.

Sect. 6. Of due behaviour between morning and evening service.

Sect. 7. Of resorting to evening ser-

Sect. 8. Of the duties after return

from evening service.

Chap. 9 A digression by way of answer, some Objections against
the practice directed: And two
forms of prayer, one for morning,

The Table.

the other for Evening, which may be used in the Family upon the Lords day, or on any other great Festival with little alteration. pag. 215.

The Fourth Part treateth of most Solemn retirement into the Closet for Humiliation, and duties there.

Chap. 1. An account of what is to be treated of particularly in this part. pag. 242.

Chap. 2. Of the nature and ends of fasting. pag. 244.

Chap. 3. That Fasting is a Christian duty. pag. 247.

Chap. 4. How often a Christian is to fast. pag. 252.

Chap. 5. Of preparatory acts for private fasting days. pag. 257.

Chap. 6. The order of true humiliation, or penitentiary devotions. pag. 262.

pag. 262.
Sect. 1. The entrance into this work,
and after what manner to begin.
Sect.

The Table.

Sect. 2. Of reading so as to prepare for self-examination.

Sect. 3. Of self-examination and the

view of our life.

Sect. 4. Of the endeavour of godly forrow. How to work our felves to it.

Sect. 5. Of repentance, which is the effect of Godly sorrow, its true nature and way of practice.

Sect. 6. An exemplification of the

former rules in two sins.

Sect. 7. A further consideration of Repentance in regard to some particular sins.

Sect. 8. Of that Faith which is required in order to the pardon of sin.

Sect. 9. Of prayer upon such fastingdays. A prayer which may be used on such days, made according to the rules of the former.

Sect. 10. Of Offerings to God for the use of the poor, requisite on fasts, and of due carriage after devotions

finished.

Chap. 7. Of great and more solemn. Fasts, and the work thereof. pag.

Chap 8. The conclusion of all. pag. 306. Enter

The Table. หญิงเหม่ง Tosur ปริมญาจะปฏิก et Programme in is not on the 1 L. M. S. Vierra Source to Lock .: Prose stim, a trock 35 0 101 mayly some some Theological time country is eight development Part. I. Chap. 1.

Part. I. Chap. 1.

Enter into thy Closet.

OR, A

METHOD

FOR

PRIVATE DEVOTION.

Part I. CHAP. I.

Of the necessity of Privacy, and those Christian Duties which require it:

Hat person can no wise be esteemed a serious and thorow Christian, uprightly and cordially discharging his duty towards God, who is a stranger unto privacy, and useth not to withdraw himself from company, even the company of his nearest friends, often presenting himself alone before B God:

Part. I. Chap. T.

God: For that, besides the worship of God, which we perform to him in the Publick Affemblies, and joyntly with the rest of the Family, of which we are members, belides, I fay, praying, hearing, and receiving. &c. in the Church, and praying with the people of our own house, there are feveral religious duties to be performed by us, without which the power of godliness can never be kept alive in our hearts, nor the forvice, which before or with others we do unto God Almighty, be hearty, mature, and compleat; which duties can never be performed as they should be, if we are in company. To wit.

that a Christian often examine himfelf, take account of his own state and actions, whether his heart be so stedfast in holy purposes as it has been, or ought to be, or as he hath wowed to God it should be: whether his practices of late have been answerable to such resolutions and engagements, as he hath made: or whether his heart be more indifferent and

careless than it was, and his actions more loofe and irregular: This, I fay, Part I. is absolutely necessary to an holy life; for that without it, he may infenfibly go back and grow worse, he may delay his returns unto God, or not return after feveral wandrings. and (if fuddenly catcht) die without the particular repentance of many fins.

Secondly, It is as necessary, that a Christian confess himself to Almighty God; that is, that having taken such an account of his wandrings, he acknowledge them, bewail them, and beg pardon of them before God.

Thirdly, Because repentance cannot be without reformation, it is necessary, that he consult and consider with himself bow he may grow better; what occasions of his sins there were, which may be avoided; what means of the contrary virtues, which may be used, and resolve serioully with himself, that these and these occasions he will avoid, these and these means use.

Now forasmuch as such resolution

Part. I. Chap. 1.

ons can never be upright and firm, except made with deliberation heed and thoughtfulness; and forasmuch as such deliberation cannot be taken in company, nor all things duly weighed, where we have a crowd of occasions and objects to take off our thoughts, it is therefore necessary that for such work we be alone: and in the other cases, because that examination of our selves must needs be very sleighty and short, which we make while we fit and talk with others; because also those confessions, which we make in publick or with others, may be, and most frequently are, too general to reach our particular case and fins, it is therefore necessary for the doing of them also, that we retire or go alone.

And to conclude, because he, that would keep himself close to the waies of holiness, must do all these things often; it is therefore necessary, that he be often alone, at least as often as with any tolerable convenience he can; and to that purpose, if his condition admit or will afford

afford it, that he have a place convenient to retire to, which we will Part. I. call a Closet.

CHAP. II.

Of the Situation and Furniture of their Closet, who have choice.

NOW (it being supposed that my condition allows me so much choice, as that I might have it fo) my Closet would I have no unpleasant place, as sweetly situated as any place of my house, that I might delight to be therein, and by no means a low or darksome room, but as high as I well could: for that fo it will be most remote from the noise, company, and disturbance of the people, who are busied usually below; and besides that, some secret Property there is in fuch high and eminent places, whence we may behold the heavens and over-look the earth, which (to me) much raiseth the foul and elevates the affections,

Chap. 2.

as if we derived or partaked more from Heaven, by how much nearer we come to it. Our Saviour there-Acts 10.9. fore used to go up into a Mountain Acts 1.13. to pray: and St. Peter went up upon and 20. 8. the house for the same purpose, that is, probably into an upper room, fuch as the Disciples were assembled in. And if it might be, my passage thereanto should be through two other outer rooms, at least through one, the door or doors of which I might ever have shut, when I thither retired to the end that my voice, which many times I shall have occasion, for my own quickening, to use, might Thot be heard without.

The Furniture of my Closet I would have a little more, than that of Elisha's Chamber, A Table, a 2 Kings 4. Stool, and a Candlestick: and instead of his Bed an hard Couch, or great Chair, on which I might fometimes lean my weary or aching head: But a Couch the rather, for that fometimes I haply might find it necessary to spend the whole night there, and might thereon take fome repose. To these I would add a Bible a Com-

mon-

mon-Prayer - book, two Paper - books (which when filled must be supplied Part I. by two others) and a Pen and Ink, Chap. 2. Another Book or two (of which hereafter) I may also see occasion to add to these. A Chimney, against Winter's cold, to make the place endurable, if need be, a whole night, would be no contemptible convenience. If besides these, I there keep any thing, as Students do Books, Gentlemen Writings, and Ladies Medicines, & c. all thefe I would have placed on one fide, or at least, one fide I would have free from them, against which should either stand a Table, or a praying Desk (that when occasion should be, I might lay a Book or Paper before me) and the wall over fuch Desk or Table should be hung (if I were able to do it) with fome stuff, of one colour, (Green the best for theeyes sake) to the end that, when there kneeling at my Prayers, I might have in mine eye nothing to call away or divert my thoughts. To any man, whose Genius this propolal fuits not with, I offer that practice of Daniel (ch. 6, 101) who defigned opening B 4

Part I. Chap. 3.

opening his window or casement keeled down with his face thitherward and prayed. By this means, the mind, by the fight of the visible heavens. is carried in its thoughts into the invisible, and more strongly contemplates and adores the Creator of all. there dwelling. But this is only practicable in the Country, or places of great privacy, and not at all feafons, because of the injuries of weather. I therefore prefer the other at least for constancy: both may be nfed in feafon.

CHAP. III.

Of most Common entrance into the Closet.

AY Closer being thus fitted, it is supposed that my recourse thereto is either more or less folemn. At no time (except upon most ernest and hasty occasions) should my entrance thereto want the folemnity of a short (but hearty) Prayer. For this being a place principally deligned

192ibate Debetion.

defigned for my devout retirement, and the performance of those pri-Part. I. vate acts of worship which I owe to Chap. 3. God, it becomes, by this its end and designment, after a sort separate or facred, a certain secret Chappel for my self; and may not therefore wantonly or flightly be by me entred into. I fay, not by Me: for whatever it is to others, to me ought it to be reverend. As therefore, when our ordinary occasions call us into (or through) Churches, we usually out of reverence to him, to whom those places are devoted, and in memory of those spiritual feasts, which we or our Christian brethren have there and in fuch places talted, fall down on our knees and worship God, beging his bleffing upon us and his people(as often as there assembled) and praifing him for the benefits which we or his people have there partaken of; so when I come, though upon common matters, into my closet, yet considering with my self, that am now in that place, wherein I have so often worshipped (or at least resolved 4 B. VUETT

Paut la Chap. 30

and had sweet converse with him, in memory thereof, and for reasons hereafter mentioned, I would kneel down and pray, to this or the like effect.

My good God, whom I here frequently and with my heart worship: bless me, I beseech thee, in the affairs I go about. Keep my heart with thee, at least ever keep it upright before thee: And as often as I here present my felf, let thy good Spirit be present with me, to dispose me unto, and assist me in thy service, through Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. Amen.

And having thus or otherwife, as I am able, or have opportunity, prayed, I would forthwith apply my felf to what I intended.

Now fuch course observed, as often as I enter my Closer, will be

many.

19 Hoate Devotion.

rhany wayes advantageous to me:
Fire, it will be a means to keep my
heart much with God, and to recal
it to him, in case my thoughts have too much wandred from him. It will make me spiritual in ordinary matters and converse. Secondly, it may be a means to procure a bleffing upon my undertakings. Thirdly, I may the better expect God's presence there, when I come purposely to feek him.

It needs not, after this discourse, to admonish, that we ever take heed what matters here we do. I would not choose this as a place of my vainer discourse, or free hours, as some do, who are ever severest in company, and allow themselves liberty in private, or amongst their Confidents, whom if they can but get into fuch a place, where neither mens eye, nor ear can reach them, (as the Closet for the main is supposed to be) their company shall be vain and frolick, to as high a degree almost as any mens. I take it. (and I am greatly deceived, if I mistake it) for a certain argument, that the

Part. I. Chap. 3. the serious belief of a God, and of the World to come, is much wanting in his heart, who dare be naught, idle, or finfully merry, if he can but get out of men's sight and cognizance.

coadmonlife, that we ever all a local water meeters here we do. I would not choose this as a place of my water shoole this as a place of my water should not be confident, and allow them flyes in berty on private, or amongst rise confidents, whom is the confidents, whom is the confidents are car can tack the confidents. The formal eyes not car can tack them.

gree almost estimations. I calle est fama! Lam greatly absences, of Lone state in Vera a carminario con est act

est a dylles es Na • 3 o

Part II. Chap. 1.

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PART II.

Treating of Daily Closet Duties.

CHAP. I.

That, if I am a person of leisure,
I ought daily, twice in the
day, to retire into my Closet
for devotion's sake.

IT followeth now to be considerated of more folenn retirement or entrance into the Closet. Now that I account a folenn recourse whither, when my business there is purely devotion. And such recourse is either ordinary, or more special. My ordinary retirement into my Closet should be daily; and that, if

Part. II. Chap. 1.

(1.)

(2.)

my condition will conveniently admit, as most more may, twice a day oftner I may, as at noon, feldomer I well cannot.

I am bound thereto upon the fame grounds, upon which I am bound to pray twice a day: and the faith . Pray continually the meaning of which we cannot but take to be, (1.) either pray alwaies when you may for other duties (that is, fo much time as show canst spare from the work of thy calling, and due care of thy body, and other of fices of Charity and Piety, spend in that duty of prayer)? or elfe (2.) (parallel to that of the continual burnt offering which was called Continual, because ever continued in its confectwice a day heep a continual course of prayer morning and evening. And this, the practices of the Saints in Scripture (which we may look upon as Exemplifications of that forenamed Command) to wit, the practice of David, praying Boening, Morning and at Noon V of Daniel, as many times, and none that

we:

we read of less than twice, cannot co but enforce upon us, as the least Part H. which can be our duty in this cafe.

If any think they are excused Pfal. 55.7. from private prayer twice a day, by Dan 6.10. their praying twice a day with the Family, of which they are a part, they are to understand, that there is no particular strict Command touching the nature of our daily devotions, prescribing them to be either publick, or private, or both : but that it is most just and equitable, that God should have a liberal Dr. Ham. part of our time, as well as of our Cat. Lib. estates: that therefore, if our condi- 3. Sect. 2. tion be such, asthat besides the time, which we fpend in prayer with the Family (which no one, who would have God to blefs his Family, can think he may neglect) we have convenient leifure from other necellary matters, it cannobbe better bestowed, than in our Closer, and upon our Souls. And it will questionless be a piece of very finful vanity, to trifle it away, and omit what it might so well have been employed upon: According, as in matter of my.

Chap. I.

Part IL Chape I.

my estate, if after sufficient necessaries and conveniences provided for my self and Family, there do yet remain in my hand a portion of what God hath given me, I cannot but look upon it as my Duty to fupply therewith the necessities of those who want; and as my sin, for me idly to squander it away, which might have filled fo many hungry bellies, or clothed fo many naked or ragged backs. Further, God having injoyn'd me the duty of prayer, but left the particular frequency of it, after the nature of other free-will offerings, to my Christian discretions I ought not to be therefore the more heedless; but rather, because I know my facrifice will be ever accepted how often foever brought with an honest heart, out of an holy ambition of pleasing God and fending up an odour of a fweet favour unto heaven, ought I to bring it as often as I can: And furely twice a day I may present even my private devotions. no bur . vewe it elign of

If I be fingle and in my own power, there is no question but I may e If.

If I be the Master or Mistress of a Family, there is little question of it : Part 11 If I be a fervant, or one who works Chap. 1. for my living, there is indeed fomewhat the more question; for that not only I may be straitned in time, but want the conveniency of privacy; But yet even in this case, what hinders, but that, being I cannot do fo well as I would, I may do as well as I can? To wit, rifing one piece of an hour ordinarily fooner, or lying down so much later, fall down upon my knees by my felf at my bed's fide, and privately. pour out my confessions and prayers before God. And what if my fellow fervant be with me? Why fhould I be assamed to do before him, what he cannot but acknowledg he also ought to do? Shall I not one day much more blush and be confounded at the omission of my duty, before Men and Angels, and God himself, than here at the performance of it? And which shame rather to be chosen? That, before God, all Men, Angels, Devils, than This, before one or two? That which

Part II. Chap. 2. which is eternal, or This, which after I have once or twice despised, I shall be troubled with no more? That which hath a real ground in turpitude and sin, or This which ariseth only from a foolish bashfulness? Begin to do so, and after the first or second time thou wilt never be ashamed of it: I assure thee at least, thou wilt never repent.

This then should be my ordinary

retirement twice a day.

Our more special retirement ought to be upon Lords days, Hely days, and our own private Fast-days, each of which will come hereafter to be considered. In the mean time our daily retirement and devotions that be proceeded with.

CHAP. IL

Considerations to personale to dais

ly devotion and prayer in pri-

ND to the end I may be fore to keep fuch course as before faid,

faid, let me fit down and feriously C

weigh,

First, The concernment, importance, and vast moment of those things, which by prayer I am to feek and may obtain, above the other, upon which most of my time is spent. What is it of worldly goods, which will not passaway (at least as to me, and my enjoyment of it) with my felf? I dying, all dies with me: my estate, my honours, my friends, and all fuch, are no more comfortable to me, when death once appears; but happily a torment, being that they are all now to be left. It is therefore but to the end of my threefcore years and ten (if I should live fo long) or thereabouts, that these cambe good at all: And of these my threescore years and ten (which is a thousand to one, whether ever I reach) how many are already gone? Perhaps one Moyety, perhaps more. So then, those things which my other time feeks, are of a pitiful, short, and transient concernment. But the grace of God's Spirit, an holy Fitart,

Part II. Chap. 2. Part II. Chap. 2.

a good Conscience, Reconciliation with my heavenly Father, these and fuch like, are not only of concernment for my present happiness, but for my eternal. The richest, honourableft and most worldly-happy Man, if devoid of grace, an enemy unto God, conscious to himself of Villany, cannot in all his abundance here enjoy or like himself, much less either account himself, or be accounted, an happy person. For what can that man acquiesce in, whose own heart calling him a rogue, lays a fatal necessity upon him to hate, and ever and anon to be ready to execrate, himfelf? Certainly there is no present possible happines, which is comparable to that bleffed calm and quiet, which ariseth from the sense of a Man's own upright heart, and discharged duty. Infomuch that were there no fuch thing as an heaven to come, I should not fear to pronounce, that that man neglects those things which are of greatest conducement to his present happiness, who neglects to seek unto God, to commune with his own heart,

heart, to fet all straight, and to re-claim himself to an holy Life, the Part II. Chap. 2. great means by which fuch peace, the most real felicity in the world, can be had. But suppose we such a person ready to die, and it said unto Luk. 12. him, Thou fool, this night shall thy 20, Soul be taken from thee; his peace being unmade with God, himself unacquainted with heaven, his conscience telling him, that all his time hath been spent upon what he must now leave, and no provision made (but of a treasure of wrath against Rom. 11 the day of wrath) for that eternal state, into which death is his entrance; is he not now a most unhappy wretch? Is it not to him a pain equal to the pains of death to think he must leave all? Hath he not therefore, by devoting himself so to this world, and scraping together fuch an ample portion thereof, only made himself more miserable, and that in this present life? For is there any misery here, like to that anguish, which racks fuch a foul upon his now instant departure? And would I then so spend my time, as that

Part II. Chap. 2, that I might, by the spending of it, become at my departure more miserable than any, save those who have lived as I? Would I so spend it, as that the very thinking or resecting, how I had spent it, should then most torment me, when I have most need of comfort, to wit in my dying hour? And yet thus do all men spend their days, who neglect their devotions, or duties of daily address unto God.

But further, suppose we such a

person dead, and we have him stript of all even his imaginary happiness, naked of every thing, save his sins:

Of these his bones are full, and they shall lye down with him in the dust: His works follow him, and his wages meet him. Evident therefore it is, that what he hath spent his life upon, is now of no concernment or

moment to him at all, any otherwife, than to render him for ever as miserable as he can be. And is this a desirable end, for a man all his daies to be driving at; to be miserable in life, by reason of an evil

conscience, or an impossibility of li-

Job 20.

king and loving himself; to be miserable in death, by the advancing of Part II. Chap. 2. that difquiet, his former torment; and most miserable after death by the perfection of that and all other mischiefs? Whereas if some of those daies, (possibly hours) which the world employed, had been taken up infeeking unto God, how might that portion have fanctified all the rest, have led him to a right improvement of what he got, and that improvment of all been an unspeakable pleasure and content to him here, and hereafter have wrought him an eternity of bleffedness? Not to mention that unspeakable fatisfaction, which the hearty performance of fuch devotions, through the blood of Chrift, would have filled him with, which we may hereafter consider. Whoso therefore truly loves himself will love his Closet and his Prayers.

Secondly, Let me weigh the Reafonableness hereof, that God should have a considerable part of my Time who hath given me fo much for my felf, and the unreasonableness of the

Part II. Chap. 2.

Ifaiah 58.

contrary. Let me deal ingenuously: may not God well expect more of my time, than what is by any law fet apart or confecrate to his worfhip? And it being the genuine Evangelical fense of the fourth commandment, keep all thy life an holy rest from doing thy own works, de-lighting thy self and acquiescing ever in the Lord, will it not in a good measure hold thus? Rest as much as thou canst to thy devotions, spend as many hours as thou canst with God. Or suppose that this Law would not in equity bind me hereunto (which it feems to do) is it not reasonable that there should be free-will-offerings of our Time as well as of our Estates? and will there be any better way found for the employing of what we can spare thereof, than the thus fanctifying and devoting it unto God? I am confident, whatever mens Practices may be, their Consciences cannot gain-fay, but do highly approve and commend to them, what is pressed. We may complain fondly of the shortness of time; but evident it is that

that we fpend much upon this p world, much upon our gains, much Chap. 2. upon our pleasures, much upon our ambitions, much also upon those neceffary acts of life, eating, drinking, fleeping, and much too upon (God knows) we know not what. Now let those who account themfelves to have least leisure, find but time enough to confider, when they go to bed every night, how much time they have loft, or triff'd away, that day, and fetting it down every night, reckon at the weeks end, and fee, to how many hours it will amount. Do so but one week, or two, and see if you do not blush at the ordinary excuse for neglect of prayer, that you have not time. For the issue will be of these two, the one either my whole time hath been really imployed, and that upon my common affairs and necessary care of my body; or elfe some part of it (to wit, so much as hath not been imployed) hath been trifled away. Now (utrum horum) let me take which I please. If it be supposed all to have been employed, is it not most

most unreasonable, that worldly bufinels and my body should have all. Chap. 2., and God and my Soul have none, or next to none? Did God make me for himself, and allot me such a meafire of time for his glory and for provision for my foul, and are they only some few minutes, which I can find either for him or it? Was, fay, every day given me for thefe ends, and can I spend all without confiderable feeking either, as I do. if I allow nothing to private devo-tion? Ought I not therefore to leffen my business, rather than neglect the great ends of my being? If on the other fide, a confiderable part of my time were lost and trifled away, (as I dare fay, infallibly it will appear upon due account taken) is not this a most unreasonable part in me, that I can find time to lofe, and yet no time to pray?

And further, Thirdly, it may somewhat quicken me, if I consider, that though it should be questioned whether it be strictly my duty thus and thus oft to pray, because there may feem to be wanting an express

com-

command, yet I cannot but be fenfible, that it is my duty to pray, and to Part II. pray often, (for this, there are not Chap. 2. wanting commands) and that therefore prayer being a duty and wellpleasing unto God, the more thereof is performed, the more acceptable fervice do I do to God; provided prayer thrust not out my other duties: the frequency, I fay, can never offend, except in the case of neglecting other duties to perform it: And herein commonly men are not apt to be guilty. Suppose it therefore not to offend in this case, being that it is a duty, it must please, and please the more, by how much it self is more. Now this to ingenuity is no mean incentive to frequent prayer, that hereby I the more please my God, and delight heaven.

Fourthly, Let me consider, that as Prayer it self is the most powerful and effectual means that a Christian can use for the effecting of all he would: so there is no prayer more powerful than that which is most frequent and importunate. In

C 2 general,

Part. II. Chap. 2.

Exod. 32. 10. Ifai.45. 2.

general, as to the power of prayer, it is fuch that it feems to have done violence to Omnipotence it felf, as in the case of Moses, when God, as though graciously held or restrained, bids him let him alone: and in fome cases, if duly performed, God hath as it were allowed it to command him. But what or whose prayers are they, which are thus powerful? Surely not theirs, who fo feldom come to heaven, that if it were for nothing elfe, but because they are fuch strangers, they would not speed; but theirs rather, whose daily and frequent application of themselves to the throne of grace hath rendered them there well acquainted and favourites. We may therefore observe, that the most absolute and encouraging promises of being heard, are made to the importunate suitors. The widow in parable, whom injustice it felf could not deny, was such; and therefore fped because such, because she came fo often. And that precept, each gradation of which hath a promise proportionably attemperated and fitted

Luk. 13.

fitted thereunto, as it prescribes, Part. II. fo chiefly encourageth importunity, Part. II. Chap. 2. that is, frequency as well as fervency. It is not faid, only Ask, nor only Seek, but both, and Knock besides. Mat. 7. 7 The last alone, viz. Knocking, implies frequency, and therefore much more do all the three. And to the Knocking, as being of all the three the clearest denotation or expression of Importunity, it is promised It shall be opened: as if it had been faid, those who only ask, and feek may come to speed, but those who knock, those who are oft and earnest in their prayers, shall have the treasures of heaven opened and free to them, out of which to take full fatisfaction and supply.

Now because all these things are fo, therefore can it not be, but that the benefit of fuch Practice must be unspeakable, which, as another (and for the present, the last) incitement unto daily private devotion is worthy my confideration. First, as to the inward temper of my heart (which rightly to dispose, and so disposed to keep, is a matter of the

greatest

Part li. Chap. 2.

greatest concernment to an holy life) there can be nothing thought of more effectual, than fuch practice; nor can it indeed well be conceived. how that man's heart can be kept in a thorow fense of his duty, and close with God, who maintains not some fuch daily course of devotion as is

under present consideration.

i. The maintaining hereof will keep alive in me a continual fear and awful apprehension of God: It will habituate me in all my waies. often to think upon and remember him. Now there is nothing, the apprehension of which is of more wholsom consequence unto a man, than of God, and his all-feeing eye. One, who is fensible and mindful hereof, cannot be long vain; but, if he do forget himself at any time, will foon return to his old ferioufnefs.

2. Such practice will also much conduce to the keeping of me humble, as being fensible of (because often minding) my fins: my fins, I fay, from my youth up to my preient years, my perpetual proneness

and frequent relapses unto vitious courses. These, being matter of my Part II. Chap. 2. daily confessions, thoughts, and meditations, cannot but in some good measure keep under any towning or proud conceits, which I am apt to have of my self.

a. It will also make and keep me tender, affectionate, and truly zealous in my service of God. There will be in me an habitual preparation for all duties; insomuch that I can no sooner be at them, and have engaged my self in them; but with a great deal of vivacity and readiness of Spirit, and with many inward meltings of heart I shall converse in them: this being not only my daily

4. It must therefore much increase all manner of Christian graces in my Soul; inasmuch as grace, according as we now speak thereof, is nothing else but the due disposition and bent of the Soul, which, as is evident, will be the natural consequent and fruit of such practice.

but my frequent practice, at least

frequent endeavour.

Secondly, It will have a very

Part II. Chap. 2. wholfom influence upon my life, as in all cases else, so especially in this, that I shall at no time carry on any design, which I dare not bring unto the test of heaven, and beg thereon the blessing of the God of Holiness.

Lastly, The mercies, which I receive in my own person, in my relations, in all my affairs, as procured and impetrated from God by these my daily and frequent prayers, will be innumerable; and that inward comfort and clearness of heart. with which I shall entertain and reeeive these mercies, or any thing elfe, which comes from the hand of my gracious God, inexpressible. The fame mercies evidently are not the same to all men, no more than are the fame chastisements. But to whomfoever mercies are greater mercies, or afflictions less afflictions, it cannot be, but that to him, who thus conscientiously daily converseth with God, all must be most kindly.

Now the consideration of all, which I have thus meditated, cannot

fure

of diligence in these duties. If therefore at any time negligence begin

Chap. 3. to grow over me, it may be of good effect to read over, and duly to weigh these or the like motives that I may he quickned to resume, and proceed with my proposed course: and what that course should be, it follows in the next place that I confult.

CHAP. III.

Of the Substance of every days private devotion; To persons of leisure, Reading, Meditation and Prayer.

HE private devotion of every day will be different to particular persons, according as their conditions differ. From fuch who are servants (or lead a servile life) 1 mean all those who get their living by their daily labour, whose abilities of mind are therefore meaner,

and -

Chap. 3

and whose privacy more difficult) from such, I fay, no more than this may feem to be expected, that both in the morning being rifen, and at night being about to lie down, they in the fear of God fall down before him and pray unto him ; touching which directions will anon follow.

From those, whose way of life being more liberal, their abilities and opportunities are greater, more may feem justly to be looked for, according to that rule, To whom much is given, from them shall much be required. Speaking therefore to fuch who have estates and leisure, and so may have opportune privacy, I suppose their daily privat devotion cannot be complete, except confifting of Reading, Meditation, and Prayer.

Touching private Prayer it hath been before spoken, and nothing now can by fuch, whom the prefent consultation concerneth, be said for the diffenfing with it; being it is even their duty who are of meaner quality and capacity, and therefore much more theirs, who are of greater. Touching Reading and Medi-

tation,

Luk. 12. 48.

tation, if any sufficient arise, it will com ealily be removed, (1.) by those com- Part 11. mands, which enjoyin us that we Chap. 3. Search diligently the Scriptures, that Joh. 5. 3. the word of God dwell plentifully in Egdvav. us, &c. and (2.) by fuch Characters Coloss. 3. of righteous persons as that they are 16. such whose delight is in the Law of the Lords and who meditate therein day and night. And certainly such commands being capable to be intended or remitted (I mean being to be Pfal. 1. construed with some regard, and) according to that general rule aforementioned (to whom much is given, from him much shall be required,) cannot but be interpreted to require greater and more diligent Searching (that is more of Reading and Meditating upon) Scripture, from those, who have greater opportunity and ability to do it, than they do from others, who are meaner in both.

Of fuch an one therefore, who hath not time every day, or if he haply have, yet cannot read, it may be thought he dischargeth his disty of fearthing the Scripture, if in

Part. II. Chap. 3. a way proportionable to his ability, he endeavours to acquaint himself with Scripture, to wit, by a diligent attention to it, and inquiring of it (as he hath conveniency) when it is read or preached. But of fuch an one, who can read and hath time to meditate on what he reads, and whom, it may be, it concerns to instruct others in the knowledge of Scripture (as being over them) of fuch an one, I fay, being that more is required, than of the other, it cannot in reason be thought, that he hath done his duty by bare attention unto Scripture read, except he himself read and meditate therein. And he will very hardly (we may not fear to fay, not at all) approve himself to be a godly man, if he behave not himself as Godly men did of old, that is, if he delight not in the Law of the Lord, and therein meditate not daily. If I should doubt therefore, whether it be strictly my duty day and night, morning and evening, to read the Scriptures and meditate, I cannot doubt (for I fee plain evidence for it) that it is a godly man's Character,

Character, one part of his practice as he is a godly man, to read and medi-trate: If therefore I intend to be a Chap. 4. godly man, it must be my care and practice too.

Wherefore of thefethree Reading. Meditation, and Prayer, feeing that none may be well omitted (at least not ordinarily neglected) it is requifite more particular confideration be had.

CHAP. IV.

Of Reading the Holy Scripture, The most edifying method and manner of Reading it consulted of.

BY Reading here I understand reading the sole word of God: and this, as it should constantly (for the main at least, if not ever) have a place in my daily devotions in private, fo therein, methinks, will most conveniently take place in the beginning of them, on this wife. Being entered into my Closet for my devotion's Part H. Chab. 4.

* Part. 1.

Chap. 3.

devotions fake, it becomes me first in all humility and out of the fear of God, not out of cultom, to fall down before him, and in short, according to former direction to beg his bleffing upon me, and prefence with me there presenting my self to worthip before his Majesty: To which purpose the Form, * already delivered, may be proper either for use or further direction, according as I shall see fit, This being done, forthwith let meapply my felf to the reading some portion of the word, according to my prefixed course. And what course shall that be?

Modesty would presently answer, The same which the wisdom of the Church hath prescribed for publick use. And the truth is (the Church consulting herein, as she ought, the edification of the people) this order hath, in this point, the advantage of all other, that it will lead us to read over all the most useful parts of Scripture, and those most frequently to wit, the New Testament, excepting only some Chapters of the Review

velation,

velation, three times a year; the Pfalms once a month; the Old Part Testament (excepting only the two books of Chronicles, which are for the most part extant in the Kings and Samuels and fome other Chapters of other books, chiefly relating to the fewish state)once in a year. But then if we confider its compliance with our present design, it hath these two exceptions lying against it. First. That the portions of Scripture, by that order to be read daily, are greater than what every man's, or most men's conveniency will afford time to read, meditate upon, and digest, as it is (supposed at prefent)best for a devout Christian to do. And then Secondly, That by this means a confiderable part of the Old Testament, and some part of the New will be left out; which parts are not, questionless, without their use, though comparatively not so necessary for the publick Commonalty as the other. And to the Churches prescription, it may be faid, that it was never the Churches intention to prescribe this order for mens Clo-

Part II. Chap. 4.

fets in private, where she can neither take notice of their observing nor neglecting it, but only for publick

edification and uniformity.

This order therefore being taken not to be fo proper for our present purpose, the next which will offer it felf, will be the natural order of the books in which they lye. Now this, though not liable to the exceptions, which we found against the former: (being that nothing then will be omitted, nor the Reader overburdened with too great a portion, being he is left to himself) yet hath this inconveniency, that it will detain the observer of it a great while in those parts of Scripture, which may not edifie him so much, as would the other: fo that haply Reading shall be a duller and less spiritual an exercife, than it would be, did he more wisely order it. Yet hath it this advantage also, that, the (Revelations of God and eternal life being still clearer in each succeeding part of Scripture, I mean, clearer in the Prophets than in the Law, and in the Gospel than in either) one month's reading

reading may make me fee more into that of the former month, and all Part II. lead me to the magnifying of God for the present manifest Revelation of his will.

Chap. 4.

These things being so, it may haply conduce most to our private edification, if we keep strictly to neither of these orders, but observing the conveniences and inconveniences of each to our private purpose, according to our Christian discretion frame to our felves one out of both, which may have the commodities of both, and incommodity of neither. And that may be fuch as this, To begin every Reading with a Pfalm, or, where the Pfalms are very long, with a good portion of one, taking the Pfalms in their course: (This I therefore commend by reason of the exceeding usefulness of that Book of Psalms for prayer, it furnishing a man with petitions, hymns, and ejaculations of all forts, and besides discovering very much of the hearty practice of Devotion and Godliness.) That being finisht, in the morning, to take

Part II. Chap. 4.

in order, as the Books and Chapters lye, such a portion of the Old Testament, as my Christian prudence, confidering my own conveniencies and occasions, shall judge sit :, which, where the matter affords more work for Meditation, may be shorter; where less, larger. In like manner at evening, beginning with a like portion of the Pfalms, take a part of the New Testament, as it lyes in order greater or less, according as before faid, it finds my devotion work. Some fuch course as this would I observe, till I had read over the Holy Scripture twice or thrice with such care, attention and meditation, as shall presently be described; by which time I should beginto be a little vers'd in it, andto know what parts of Scripture I used to read with greatest Christian advantage, which therefore afterward, I would read oftner than the other, fetting always a mark at the name of each Book, as they fand in the Table at the beginning of my

Pfalm. 25. Bible, when I had read that book o-14. ver that fo I might know how often

I had read each, left I come too Part II. This as to the Order of my Reading.

Having now my work thus orderly before me, it remains in the next place that I look to the best manner of doing it: whither belong

the following rules.

First. That I endeavour to read with composedness of mind and attention, not only as to the fense, substance, or subject matter of what I read, but as to the very expressions of it. For that the very expressions of Scripture are not only very useful in prayer (God loving to hear his children call upon him in his own language); but do also ma-my times carry in them such secret emphasis and force, as shall much comfort, support, awe, and otherwife affect the heart, which considers them.

Secondly, That I be fure, as I read, to observe the scope and drift of that portion of Scripture, which I read. For as to particular passages, it may so happen that the plain Reader may many times scarce un-

derftand

Chap. 4.

derstand them, they puzling even learned heads; but as to the scope of the whole, as to that which the Holy Ghost chiefly drives at, this may be commonly more easily understood : and this being understood doth not only ensure me of so much benefit, as I have understood of it, but will give special light unto those darker places, whose meaning

I do not fo well conceive.

Thirdly, That if ever I intend this part of my devotion to wit my Reading, should be acceptable to God, or otherwise than a witness against my self, I resolve upon the impartial practice of what soever I by reading find to be in Scripture commanded, and eschewing of whatfoever I there find forbidden. Such godly purpose will increase my very knowledge; For the fecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will teach them his Statutes: Whereas others, who bring not a resolution of such conscientious practice, but barely inquisitive diligence, may come to be in a great-. er measure ignorant of his mind.

CHAP.

Of Meditation, and the most edifying course in it.

These rules being thus observed, and a certain portion of Holy Scripture thus read, it will be proper for me in the next place to proceed to Meditation.

Now Meditation here I take not for the simple thinking of any thing divine, which shall offer it self, but for an orderly and serious consideration on the particulars following.

1. Upon that portion of Scripture which I have read.

2. Upon my own state and ways.

3. Upon the prayers (that is, Confessions, Petitions, and Thankf-givings) which I am presently to offer up unto God.

Touching the first, there are these three things for me to consider.

First, If I have not, as I read, been able to understand the design and drift of the Holy Ghost in what I

have

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Part II.

that, and by a short review of what I have read, comparing the parts or several materials spoken of, wattending how they hang together, endeavour to comprehend their substance and scope. He reads to no purpose, who reads not thus; for it is not repeating the words of Scripture, but understanding and digesting their sense and substance, which is to be accounted reading the Scripture; and one Chapter thus read is worth ten hastily run over.

have read any difficulty or barder passage, which seems to contain any matter of practice or article of faith (I mean which is likely to instruct me in any thing necessary to be believed or done in order to my salvation). That let me consider, and endeavour thereof to find the meaning. As to those difficulties, which concern controverses, that is, questionable Opinions in Divinity, or inquiries into matters of mere knowledge or speculation, (such things, which when they are known,

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Pzivate Devotion.

there is an end of them) thele may be very well over-look'd by an or- Chap person. As for instance; Reading Acts 13. (the last Paragraph or partition of the Chapter. which begins verse. 44.) I find. therein (viz. verfe 48.) a certain difficult expression, As many as were ordained unto life, believed. What believing and what life (i.e. heaven or bleffedness) mean, I know; but what ordained unto life means, I doubt; and truly need not much trouble my felf to inquire. Sufficient it is that I conclude from thence, that all they who shall obtain everlasting life are believers (not one unbelieving or ungodly perfon shall ever enter into heaven) and therefore particularly that I resolve upon an honest cordial receiving of the Gospel as my duty, if ever I intend for happiness Again, reading Exodus 32. I find, that Moses took the Calf they had made, and burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder. How the burning Gold in the fire, which only purifies it ordinarily, should come to make it friable or brittle, that

Parr II.

Part H. Chap. 5.

that it might be ground unto powder, I need not stand to inquire. A shorter and better way it is, to believe the matter feafible, and this relation true, as being part of God's word: all I need to conclude thence is, that Idolatry is to be destroyed, and that in fuch fort as the people may not return to it again, but rather loath and abominate it, as we do that which passeth through our bodies (for which reason Moses made the people to drink of the powder of the Calf:)and that it is the wisdom of Magistrates, whom it concerns to destroy it, as it was Moses's, to find out and contrive fuch ways or methods of destroying it. This is, I fay, as much as can concern any ordinary person: and as for the curiofity touched, it may fafely be neglected. We give not rules to make a Divine, but to direct a Christian. Now all such difficulties and curiofities, being left out, I presume the difficulties which arise in practicable matters will be but few. And for my help herein, it will be meet I reflect upon that which

which (according to the former ~ rule) I found to be the scope or Part II. drift of that Scripture, and confider the difficulty with some relation or regard thereto, observing the occasion, upon which that expression came in. This will help me very much many times. But for my further help therein, if I am able, it would be expedient I had fome fort gloss, or book explaining fuch matters: and truly what Book to pitch upon, as best in this case, is not easie to resolve. For I suppose there are not many books of notes or Commentaries upon the whole Bible in English, which medle only with necessary and practicable matters, omitting Controversials, which a private Christian, to his better edification, may well spare. For the New Testament I much admireDr. Hammond'sParaphrafe, and could ten thousand times wish such a piece were extant upon the whole Scripture. But yet it is too difficult for every plain Reader. Bishop Hall hath a Paraphrase upon the whole Bible, which comes much nearer to our

Part II. Chap. 5. our present design; But I fear this is fearce. The frequentest, best, and most serviceable that I know, is Diodate's Amorations: they have indeed a Geneva tang now and then, but pretty soberly. Some such book, according as I can get, I would furnish my felf with, which I might consult touching the meaning of such dissicult places as my Christian discretion should tell me to be practical, and for my necessary ediscretion.

Thirdly, Having thus found out the design of that whole portion of Scripture which I have read, and the meaning of such particular Texts as I shall have occasion to search into, let me in my meditations cast over again, or recollect the substance of it, and consider what am I the better for the Reading hereof?

1.Am I instructed, or further confirmed, in any matter of faith?

2. Am I taught any duty, which before I either was ignorant of, or negletted? Do I here find any precept or command, which I never before took notice of, or had forgot, 3. Is

guicken me to any duty, in which I Part II. Chap. 5. am flack, or deter me from any fin to which I and prone? Any threatning of Gods wrath? Any example of his Judgments? Any promife of mercy? Any instance of blessings on his diligent servants?

frengthen me in any temptation, comfort me in any affliction, di-

stres? &c.

s. Is there any particular emphatical or affect onate speech which may at any time quicken me? Any proper petition, confession, invocation, thanksgiving, or the like, which may be of use to me in prayer, or otherwise?

o. Is there any thing which I can observe of the experiences of holy men of old? Any thing of the deceit-fulness of sin? Any thing, whence I may learn better my own heart, either as to what it is, or what it ought to be?

Through fuch heads as these may my meditations briefly run: which heads till I am perfect in it may not

D 2 be

Part. II. Chap. 5.

o be amiss to open this my book, and examine what I have read, according to these directions laid down. And if I am able, I shall find it an incredible benefit, in the end of these my meditations to use my pen, whenfoever by any reading I have gained any more remarkable benefit, and to register in one of my Paper books (referved ever for this purpose, which for distinctions sake I may know by the name of my Memorial) that particular which I have gained: in which I need to observe no other method, but only to write all the notes which I take out of any one book, as of Matthew, Mark, &c. together, that fo at my fecond or third reading that particular book over, I may fee, what the fecond or third reading of it advantaged me more than the And these notes thus taken. because intended as helps, to my memory, I must be sure to find time within a convenient feafon to review. This is a profitable course for me to observe in my ordinary meditations upon the holy Scriptures.

As to what has been fuggested by a very pious and judicious Person, Part II. that this usage of reading the Holy Chap. 5. Scriptures in the daily course of our Private Devotions, is not fo ferviceable to the furtherance, at least to the raising Devotion. would be a certain Methodical Scheme of several affecting Heads fitted for Meditation, of which day by day one might be taken; or where the Subject were more pious, one for two or more days, (as fuppose sometimes our Lords Suffering, fometimes his Refurrection. at another time his Coming to Judgment: again, other while more generally Death, Judgment, erc.) as I do not condemn it, (and for variety fake, any may use it who please) so neither do I so generally commend it to all persons practice, as the former. For except People. have Books prepared on those several Heads, ordinary persons willfind this way of Meditation fo difficult, as they will not be able to carry on a thread of thoughts to any useful effect. Reading the Books D 3 of

Part II. Chap. 5.

of others, they may profitably follow the track of their thoughts, but few will be able to bring their own to any affective pitch of Ma-

turity.

But then as to Holy Scripture, we know how common (bleffed be the providence of our good God) it is now in all mens hands, and fo how easie to be had; we know also its fertility, how full it is, a Fountain inexhaustible, and that we ought by all means to endeavour the Word of God may dwell plentifully in us, as being useful in all conditions, on all occasions and feafons, in fickness and in health, in prosperity and adverfity; when we cannot come at Books, alone, and in company, by night on our beds, on our way by day; indeed, when and where not? So that none can ever be too perfectionit, nor reasonably go over it (at least the general uleful part of it) too often, and feldom do we go over it again, without new obfervations.

Besides, when we are once well vers'd in Scripture, we shall be able,

if we fee fit, to accommodate it, with excellent use, to the very pur- Part II. pose just now suggested Would Chap. 5. we meditate on our Lords passion, we can eafily peruse the History of it in the feveral Evangelists, and the Prophet Esuy's little Gospel to this purpose Chap. LIII, the Apostles Doctrine touching the Sacrifice of the death of Christ, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Orc. The like advantage we may have, would we meditate on the Refurrection of our Lord, or even on the general Refurrection and our own, or any like fubject, we know whither to turn, and where to read, what will afford most divine and incorrupt matter to our barren minds, and most excellently both imploy and conduct our thoughts. So that upon the whole, I judge it every way the best, with such variation as our Christian discretion shall direct; to flick to our first propounded Method. And thus, for the prefent. I dismiss the business of Reading, and Meditating on Holy Scripture, in the course of our daily Devotions. The DA

Part II. Chap. 5. The next thing which my meditations are to be employed upon, is upon my particular State and Ways, which I am in some measure to take notice of, as well that I may be more circumspect in such particulars, wherein I shall sind greater need of circumspection, as that I may be able to address my self to God in a way suitable to my condition. For my condition varying, my prayers ought to vary accordingly.

First then, as to my Ways, that is, Thoughts, Words, and Deeds, (for all these the Scripture compriseth under that one term of our Ways,) These all know to be either good or bad. And as to both, I am to look both backward and forward.

tions have befallen me, how far my heart hath closed with them, and been overcome by them; (1.) As to matters of Commission, whether of inward sins, such which are acted in the mind (as evil Thoughts, Desires, Resolutions or Designs) or of outward and bodily acting, as Words

Words and Deeds. Hath not my discourse been Untrue, Unsavory, Part II. Haughty, Passionate, or the like? my actions Ungodly, Dishonest, Uncharitable, contrary to Sobriety? And, (2.) as to Omission; Have I. left nothing undone which I was to have done, which I had refolved to do, and had opportunity for? All. this, as far as present convenience will admit, being duly considered, is feriously to be laid open before: God in my following Prayers, both : as to confession thereof, and supplication for pardon, and future grace against such miscarriages.

In like manner, if in review of my late ways, I find through grace my foul to have been confiderably taken up with good thoughts, desires, or studies, my discourse to have brought glory to God, or edification and quickening to my felf or others, my actions commendable, and such, which through Christ I hope are acceptable to God, I am to bless God for his preventing and affising grace, acknowledging with St. Paul the whole, even mine own

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labours and industry to have flowed from that Fountain. By the prace of God, faith he, I um what I um. 1 Cor. 15. Itaboured more abundantly than they 10. all, yet not I, but the grace of God which is in me.

> 2. Forward too I am to look (especially in my morning meditation, and before fuch times in which any more confiderable work or imployment awaits me,) and confider (1.) what opportunities I may have of doing fervice to God, or good to man, (2) what temptations to any fin my approaching bufiness or company probably will bring with it: and not only in my refolations to prepare and arm my felf according-Iv for the embracing, and with my utmost might doing my duty, and withstanding the sin; but also in my prayers fuitably implore Divine strength and aid.

Many fuch thoughts as these a seriousChristian, who useth to imploy time to his best advantage, will entertain while he is putting on his clothes in the morning, or outwardly taken up in any like necessary

acts.

acts. This as to meditation upon my ways.

Part II. Chap. 9.

Secondly, as to my present In-Chap. 9. ward state, the temper of my mind:

Let me examine that, whether I find any relentings or meltings of heart for those my wandrings, which I have before viewed, any sirmness and resolution for the suture against the like: Accordingly I am to apply my self to God in prayer, either for the giving me a due sense of, and remorfe for, and resolution and watchfulness against my sin, or for the heightning and strengthening those degrees hereof, which I already have.

Thirdly, as to my Outward state; Let me consider, how God's body providence hath either favoured or crossed my ordinary affairs and designs: for accordingly still I am to address my self unto God in prayer, either by praising him for my successes, or bewaiting those sins and or missions which I may judge have blasted them, or otherwise, as my Christian discretion shall suggest.

All which heads of felf-examina-

tion

Part II. Chap. 5. tion and Meditation, if, because lying here at some distance, I cannot
always readily in my memory run
through without consussion or omission, it may be expedient to have
them summed up into short questions, which I may turn to daily upon
occasion, and put each to my soul
to be answered unto, upon enquiry
made into my own conscience.

1. What fin com- SThought? Word? Deed?

2. What duty omit- Sound? Word? Deed?

3. What grace or Word?
wirtue acted in Deed?

4. How hath God dealt with me in his providences, and what in me occasioning such dealings?

s. What temper of mind am I now in, considering my own late carriage, and God's providences towards me?

6. What

to sin

7. What opportunities | Am I this day | Part II. |
Of virtue | Chap. 5.

The last head upon which my meditations are to be imployed, is my Prayers, which I am now about to offer up unto God; in which if I use a set form, I am to consider where those new particulars of confession, petition, or praises, which by examination of my felf and condition I have found necessary, must come in; after what fort they may be conveniently expressed, and sometimes (when my condition requires, and my time will permit me to be more large or earnest in any part of prayer) with what arguments I may Itrengthen my faith, and plead with God touching what I defire to fpeed for; or again with what circumstances of my sins, or God's mercies, I may heighten my repentance for my fins, or thankfulness for those mercies. If I do not use my self to a set form, then will it be necessary that I more deliberately meditate Pare II. Chap. 51

meditate what I intend to confess, to ask, to praise God for, how I shall so call upon him or conceive of him, as may fuit with those main and principal addresses, which I am to make to him. Whether every particular expression, or the just words before thought, it haply matters not very much: but that some fit, fignificant, proper and quickning expressions, for the several parts and substantials of my prayer, be prepared, it is expedient, as well for the greater readiness of the foul in prayer, which when it is much to feek in this case, cannot do its duty with attention, nor without diffurbance and intermillion of due raffe-Ction; as also that nothing unworthy of the nature of prayer, and the worship of God, may be offered up unto him. And in this point it may be fingularly helpful to confider, what of those expressions, promifes, nurratives, experiences, &c. which I have at any time read in the Word of God, may be uleful to me in those my intended addrest fes to the Throne of Grace. God

Parbate Debotiott.

(as already intimated) loves to hear ~ his own language from us; and fo Part II. it is, that the very expressions of Chap &. Scripture have a marvellous affecting Pal. 1. power upon the devout heart, beyond those, which seem not to have been alike fanctified by the Holy Ghofts using them.

CHAP. VI.

Of Prayer, and first of its sub-Stance and parts.

That I have read being thus digested by Medicarion, and by the like meditation preparation being made for Prayer, That now remains as the third and most compleat act of my daily devotion: touching which besides the precepts already given others yet remain to be given, when the confideration of the nature of the duty hath a little made way for them.

Now Prayer is a feeking unto God, and before him representing our Efrates and Defires. The 64

Chap. 6.

The general nature of prayer is a betaking or addressing our selves to God: and therefore its first act is Invocation, or calling upon him. Now our condition, who are dust and ashes, and his Majesty being considered, we cannot well be esteemed to feek unto him without adoration or worshipping of him in the beginning of these our addresfes; for that in all feeking to Superiors, we ever begin with some acknowledgment of their being above us, able to help us, &c. upon which accounts we use ordinarily fome testimonies of reverence towards them: But God being infinitely above us, the Self-existent and Almighty Fountain of our being, and the most gracious Author and bestower of all comforts, upon whom we daily live, the reverence which we bear and express to him. ought to be advanced to the highest. pitch possible. Now the acting and giving the greatest reverence and honour that we can with soul and. body, do I call Adoration. If we therefore put both these together,

we have the first part of Prayer, to Part II. wit, An invocatory adoration of God, Chap. 6. that is, an humble calling upon him, accompanied with worshipping and adoring his infinite Majesty. And this in the most complete prayers extant in Scripture we may observe : particularlyin that for ever to be reverenced pattern,ourLord'sPrayer, the first sentence contains what we speak of. (Our Father: this is a calling upon God. Which art in Heaven; these are words besitting one who adores his Majesty.) So in that prayer of Hezekiah, Isaiah xxxvii. 16. O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the Cherubims; thou art God, even thou alone, &c. How evidently doth this beginning of his prayer carry in it an Invocation of (or calling upon) God, accompanied with the acknowledgment and adoration of his Deity?

The first part of prayer we gathered out of those words (expresfing its general nature) it is a feeking unto God. The fecond we may gather out of them, which follow, it

Part II. Chap. 6. Our estates naturally are sinful and miserable. So far forth as we retain any thing of our old nature, so far are fin and misery inseparable adjuncts or attendants unto us. The representing therefore our estates before God is the confessing our sins, and laying open our grievances and wants before him. A second part of prayer then is Confession.

That which all finners should defire is pardon: that which all miserable persons do naturally desire is belp. The representing then our desires before God is the begging mercy and grace to help in time of need;

that is,

1. Pardon of fin-

2. Deliverance from our milery:
Internal, by the fanctification
of our hearts, and growth in
grace.

External, by meet supplies of

our outward wants.

Athird aft of prayer therefore is, Pesition or asking.

Some-

Somewhat more yet is considerable in our states here below, which Part II. though naturally miferable, as afore. Chap. 5. faid, yet are by the manifold grace of God made in feveral respects more comfortable by reason of variety of bleffings. Now he that receives a benefit ought to have at the least a will and desire of thankfulness. He therefore who duly reprefents his state and desires unto God, lays open also before him those several mercies which at his hands he receives, humbly bleffing and praifing him the Author of them. The last part of prayer then is Thanksgiving.

Now because all these may be done either for our felves or others, therefore is prayer double, or of

two forts.

That which merely respects our felves.

That which we offer up for o-

thers, called Intercession.

From all this it is evident; that the first thing, which he, who would learn to pray, must take care of, is that he throughly know himse'f, that

Part II. Chap. 6. is, (1) Be acquainted with his own state, with his sins, his miseries and wants, inward and outward; otherwise he can never duly represent them unto God. (2) That he well know his own desires and resolutions, lest he play the hypocrite with God, asking what he desireth not, or vowing what he intends not. These are the substantials of Prayer.

CHAP. VII.

Of the right manner of Prayer.

First, of its inward manner.

Some considerations to quicken to sincerity and heartiness in Prayer. What graces are to be exercised in each part of Prayer.

THE manner of the performing every duty is much looked upon by God. Now prayer being such an immediate act of worship, and it being most just, reasonable and necessary, that we should worship God with the whole man, that is, both with soul and body; in the manner of prayer there can be only considerable, its Inward and Outward part.

The inward manner of prayer is unquestionably most respected by God: for that according hereunto is the prayer, and the man, sincere

Part II.

or otherwise. And the Consideration hereof should incite us chiefly to care herein. I may pray in as good and as many words, in as devout postures, and, in a word, after as pious a fort, as to what there is outward in prayer, as ever man did, and yet be hypocritical in my prayers. But it is impossible, that I should pray with my Soul and all that is within me, and not be cordial, honest and fincere in those prayers which I so make: And therefore as God doth, fo, I fay, every Christian ought to look chiefly to the inward disposition of his soul in his Devotions.

We may note further for our quickening herein, that God not only requireth the heart in prayer, but bath accepted and often doth accept the inward breathings of it, and answer them as fully, as if all other circumstances belonging to the outward manner of prayer had been 1 Sam. i. observed. As in the case of Hannah; who in that fo fuccessful and effectual prayer of hers spake in her heart only.

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Now

Now prayer is then right as to its inward manner, when there is an Part II. hearty exercise of Christian graces Chap. 7. and affections suitable to the substance of the prayer, which we offer up to God, (that is to fay, to go through the parts of prayer.) Jan dore and call upon God as I ought. when in my calling upon him, I really believe that he is, and that he is fuch that he hath revealed himfelf to be, and as I now express or conceive him, and therefore with reverence humbly submit my self before his Majesty. It is a piece of holy skill worthy taking notice of, which is observable in the prayers of holy men in Scripture, That they usually fo frame their invocations (or callingsupon God) as may fuit with their main business at the Throne of grace, and strengthen their faith for those particular mercies which they ask. Thus in that forenamed prayer of Hezekias's against the Affyrian Armies. O Lord of Hofts, (for he prayed against a mighty host, and for deliverance from it.) God of 15rael (he therefore fo calls God; to put

a put him in mind of his covenant with Ifrael, that he might stretch Chap. 7: forth his hands for the deliverance of his own people) who dwellest between the Cherubims (that is, who hast here recorded thy name, and promited to meet and bless, and from thy Mercy-Seat to answer, thy people. He therefore makes mention of God's promised presence, or dwelling between the Cherubims, partly because he was then in the Temple, and so worshipping God in a manner before his mercy-feat, that is before the Cherubims, but more especially (as we may conceive) That he might prevail with God to fave that City, where his Temple and this his Mercy-Seat was placed.) Every expression in this his invocation hath somewhat in it proper to his prayer and fuit, and fo of force to strengthen his faith and dependance upon God, that he might the more furely prevail. In fhort then, the graces to be exercised in adoration or calling upon God, chiefly are, Faith, Fear, or Reverence of God, and Humility.

I then confess my self to God as I ought, when with hearty forrow Part. 11.

I ought, when with hearty forrow Chap. 7. and repentance (which, if earnest, will be accompanied with a kind of indignation against my self) I lay open impartially my fins before him, not sparing the sweetest or closest: and with an humble sense of my own vileness, impotency, and emptiness, acknowledge my wants, or his just judgments upon me for any of my fins. So that the chief grace to be exercised peculiarly in confession is repentance and godly sorrow. an humble and tender sense of what we confess, accompanied with shame of our felves, and abborrency of our fins, and, if occasion require, justify- Plal. 51.4. ing God.

Further then, I ask as I ought, when, as sensible of mine own unworthiness, out of an humble trust in God through the merits of his Son (which trust his gracious promises and declarations of good will through him, by me ever had respect to, do encourage me to take up) I heartily and with pure intention desire what I ask at his hands; or at least am heartily sor-

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Part II. Chap. 7.

ry, if I cannot fay I heartily defire all I ask. Now because, while I am asking, it so cometh to pass, that I often intermix fomewhat of vow. as in asking the pardon of some past fins, many times I engage to diligent and watchful opposition for the future against them; therefore it is necessary, that if I would ask aright, I ask with resolution and purpose of endeavouring a new life. And further, for that I cannot expett forgiveness from God, except I forgive from my heart my brethren, therefore I must ask in charity. So then the graces chiefly to be exercised in Petition are, First, Faith or an humble trust and hope in God through Jesus Christ that I shall speed (which is most truly Praying in his name.) Secondly, Sincerity, and real Love towards God and holiness. Thirdly, A stedfast purpose of obedience, which is the most considerable part of repentance. Fourthly, Charity towards my Brethren.

Lastly, I then praise or give God thanks for his mercies as I ought, when I have an inward acknowledg-

mems

ment and sense that it is from him alone, and through his mere Part II. favour, that I enjoy these mercies: Chap. 7. and when, not only I my felf do admire, but desire that heaven and earth may admire him for his goodness: when also I do all this with a resolution of improving the mercy given, that is, of walking as it becometh one, who hath been vouchfafed fuch a bleffing, and devoting or giving my felf wholly up to him, to please and serve him in all things. So that the graces to be exercifed in thanksgiving chiefly are, 1. Humility, and a fingle eye at the grace of God; or a fense of our own unworthiness, and of God's free mercy and grace, the only fountain of all received or hoped for benefits. 2. Love, or an admiration of his goodness, accompanied with a defire that he may receive from us and the whole Creation all possible glory for it. 3. Resolution, and study of greater and more suitable obedience and duty to him. And to this purpose (4.) A more zealous and pashonate, but hearty Devoting our E. 2 felves

Chap. 7.

of felves to him, which is our truest gratitude.

Of expressing our gratitude to God, for mercies received, by liberality or charity to those who want fuch mercies, somewhat will anon be faid, in a proper place and more

distinctly.

In the mean while, these we may conclude the chief of those graces, in the exercise of which the due inward manner of prayer, or a praying temper consists: a composition so amiable, as that it will ever, where it is, fend up an odour of a sweet favour unto Heaven, and delight, fhall I fay, or overcome, the Almighty Majesty.

CHAP. VIII.

Part. II. Chap. 8.

Of the best outward manner of Prayer, in sit postures and sit words. Of praying by gist, and the inconveniences alledgable against it. Of praying by a form, and the incoveniences alledgable against it.

An accommodation and reconcilement of both.

In the outward manner of Prayer the use of fit postures and meet words.

Now, though the posture of the body seem to be a small matter, yet methinks my Prayers want their due solemnity, if not performed in a posture of worship. True it is, many a devout prayer a man may make riding upon his horseback, walking in the fields, and the like: and right Christian is it, thus to sanctifie our necessary journeys, or the time which otherwise would be E 3 wholly.

Part II. Chap. 8.

wholly loft in travel, or stoln away by fuch recreatory obambulation: But these are occasional, and not fet and folemn devotions. Here the body being otherwise necessarily imployed, the most which we can give to God is the foul: or if to thoughts, words be added, it is as much as well can be. But in our fixt course of devotion, it is not to be supposed that we worship God (alind agentes) imployed with any thing but his worship: And therefore herein let the body, as well as the foul, be taken up in meet acts of worship. Now that I account to be the best posture of worship, which best expresseth an inward reverence of that Majesty, to whom we address our felves; who having fearfully made the body, and to this day wonderfully upheld and preserved it, and (which is infinitely more) redeemed even the very body to immortality by the body and blood of his Son, hath obliged it, as well as the foul, to all possible homage. And it is to be observed, that St. Paul seems to speak (chiefly, if not only) of private

vate and his daily devotion, when he faith, I bow my knees to the God Part 11. and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Chap. 8. What was his therefore, let it be our practice, as often as we thus pray, to bow our knees : and (if to no other end, but that we may be fure to mind that they be holy and without wrath) let us add the lifting up of hands. Other postures may be fometimes necessary in our folemn humiliations or more earnest deprecations of any imminent evil; fuch as is Proftration, or casting our selves on the earth before God: to which, pious discretion will easily in their feason direct.

As to matter of words, or the forms of prayer, this age hath seen more controverse, and that in England alone, than all ages from the beginning of the world have known all the world over. Touching which matter I say only, That the nature of prayer being, as before said, a seeking unto God by way of adoration, confession, petition, and praise, if we do this with honest hearts, and suitable affections, whether the words

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in which we utter our felves, be our own or another's; whether they be forethought or fudden, (provided they fitly and reverently express the inward fense of our hearts) it mattereth not, nor is it at all essential unto Prayer. For the full Essence of Prayer is complete, fuch an address being made inwardly by the foul, and outwardly thus expressed by the tongue and body: and be the words whose they will, my praying them (that is, offering them up to God) with an heart fuitable to them, hath made them as much mine, as if I had invented, contrived, dictated, or pen'd them at the first. I think therefore, if men would be fober and peaceably minded, this need not make either a stir in the World, or move any scruple to a Christian's Conscience.

I profess my self no whit guilty of undervaluing the free essusions of the soul before God (in private especially) in such expressions as the affected and moved mind suggests, or as the spirit gives utterance. But

in my daily private devotions, to ~ use perpetually such a loose and ar-Part. II. bitrary way, I think hath these inconveniences. First, that (by reason. sometimes of the coldness, dulness, and heedlesness of my heart; other times by reason of distractions, incumbrances, and the like almost unavoidable mischiefs) my devotions will be too often flightly flubbered over, perfunctorily and disorderly performed: Whereas had I a mature and well composed prayer before me, which I use wholly to offer up to God, all would be much more fubstantial: And though haply my heart may have been, in these my prayers too too dead (as it was likely perhaps to have been, had I prayed otherwise, for such or such a season) yet shall I not prove guilty of fuch idleness, negligence, and flightiness, as otherwise I should have been guilty of. And fuch infirmities, which are incident to us by reason of our present frailty and state, God is likely the more easily to pity and pass by, when he sees that, though we are more indisposed than. ordina-E 5

Part II. Chap. 8.

ordinary, yet are we no whit less diligent. Secondly, another inconvenience thereby may oftentimes be the ommission of many things necessary to be confessed, asked, or returned thanks for ; not fo much through negligence, dulness, &c. (as before) as incogitancy and unavoidable forgetfulness. Our ordinary wants and fpiritual concerns we may come not to mind, either at all, or as we ought, through being much intent on fome other pressing (outward) evils. Common experience will easily fatisfie a Christian herein, who is but vers'd in the practice of what we speak of. Have I not many times kneeled down before God with an intention to ask fuch things, which, by reafon of my earnest asking somewhat elfe, I have forgotten to ask before I arose? and hath not the reason been the mere following extemporary fuggestion? Let it be considered.

Again, on the other side, to use always a certain and constant form of words, seems to have these inconveniences.

veniences. First, That we having almost daily new fins to confess, new Part II. wants to beg a fupply of; thefe by Chap. 8. fuch courfe shall be omitted, or only. lightly and generally toucht, at least not so particularly and affectionately pressed and infisted upon as they ought. 2. Besides, sometimes haply I would spend more time in prayer than at another time. Now if my prayers be always the fame, Icannot, except (as Papilts are reported to do their Credo's and Ave Maries) I should run over and over the same again. 3. Further, frequent use may breed dulness, as some may think, and fay they find.

These being the inconveniences of both cases, and each case besides having advocates (or persons that love and plead for them) even amongst the common people, it will be best to move for an Accommodation: And that may be on this

wife.

The inconveniences of the former case may be avoided, by the having a certain good, plain, and full form of prayer, which we well understand. Part. II. Chap. 8. derstand, and by usually tying our felves hereto: not fo as, 1. to think our work is done by the prayer being faid; for that were to neglest the most necessary part in the manner of prayer, to wit, the inward address and application of the heart to God, contrary to former rule: nor fo, 2, as not to alter for this or that time any expression as God may move our hearts in prayer, or insert any new thing as we have need: but only fo, 1. as to enfureour felves that our devotions and prayers be found and complete, that we offer not to God the halt and the lame : and fo, 2. as to keep the mind fixt and constant to its business, intent upon all its spiritual concerns.

And again, the inconveniences of the latter case will be avoided hereby, that we have not supposed the form upon occasion altogether unalterable, as above said, but rather to have its sit and proper places, wherein we may insert or put in the confession of new sins, with their proper aggravations, as also sit places for the adding of any new

matter

matter of Petition or Thanksgiving, as there shall be occasion. And to Part II. the last inconvenience of this second Chap. 8. case, it may be said, that Use cannot beget dulness, if the prayer, thus supposed to be framed, be used according to former precepts, with Reading and Meditation before it, which exercises will have in a good measure quickned the heart for prayer. And, as for such more solemn seasons, when we would spend more time with God in prayer, we need not fo to tie our felves to these our ordinary devotions, those which at fuch feafons we intend, being already supposed more than ordinary. We may be larger in the confession of fin, more particular in its aggravation, more earnest for fuch and fuch mercies as we want, &r. according as we shall fee occafion: and either use the groundwork and fubstance of those our usual prayers with such amplifications as we shall judge meetest, or for that time, instead of them, use fuch other prayers as we shall find best to suit with our temper and occasions;

Part II. Chap. 9. occasions; for the preparation of which prayers, directions will here-

after be given.

In the mean time for better understanding and comprehending the precepts given, as also for the supply of such who may haply be scarce able to frame to themselves such a form, it may not be amiss to subjoyn one for morning, and another for evening, framed according to the former rules.

CHAP. IX.

A Form of Prayer made according to the former accommodation, which may be used in our morning Privacy.

THE Christian then having read and meditated, as before directed, let him reverently kneel down, lifting up his hands and eyes, but most surely his heart, to Heaven, and fay,

Almighty and most blef Part II: fed God, Lord of heaven Chap. 9. and earth, who makest the Invocation out goings both of morning and Adoraand evening, and by whose good hand upon me thy creature I am awaked out of my last nights sleep, and being risen, here present my self before thee: I humbly bow to thee my knees, and therewith my heart and foul, and defire with all that is within me to adore thy bleffed Majefty.

But most unworthy, and of Confession, t. my self most insufficient, am I fin. to perform unto thee any worship or service. What is dust and ashes, (and such am I, if I were innocent) to take upon it to speak unto thee, O Lord ? But 1, O God, am a guilty wretch, one whom it becometh

Part II. Chap. 9.

becometh to stand afar off, and shame covering my face, to cry Unclean, Unclean. My foul is naturally over-run with lusts, as with an universal Leprofie: there is no free part of me. My life is as universally corrupt as mine heart: My child-hood and youth have not only been vanity, but fin: I have done nothing else therein, but fulfilled the defires of my flesh and mind. My corruptions have only grown with me: and my fins fince become fomuch the more finful, by how much the more knowledge I have had of thy will, and frength and engagements to have performed it.

lens.

2 of actual To this very day, as indeed I ever have done, I daily break. thy holy Laws in thought, word, and actions, by choosing what thou hast forbidden, and

neg-

neglecting what thou hast commanded. ***. In all my ways I Part II.
most miserably transgress. My
very † sleep it self, * Here confess

O Lord, is not innocent. Nor is it thus only in the common and more ordinary actions of my life. Those few good deeds which I do, have many, not only + infirmities, but fins in them: and have need to repent of my very righteousness [of my **** I therefore fo desire to do, and am

here come before thee, as thou hast commanded me, to confess my sin unto thee, with hopes, according to thy promise, that I shall find mercy, I have, O God, confessed to thee, as I am able. Now

* Here confess any particular or fresh sin committed, or duty negletted, which in thy examination of thy selfthon hast found.

The use of these or any such words, to restect in thy thoughts upon any particulars, which thy conscience tells thee, they may surly represent to God touching thee.

Now Mercy, Mercy, let me Part II. find with thee through Christ Chap. 9. Jesus my Saviour. Remember

Petition that atonement, which he For our made by the Blood of his felves. those Streams Crofs: In

throughly wash away my filth: By those Wounds let me be healed; and by his Death let

me attain a bleffed

* Particularly let immortality; (**) me obtain the par-And fend down thine don of *

holy Spirit abundantly into mine heart, which may renew me throughout according to thine Image, healing all the naughty inclinations of my foul, and begetting in me an hearty love unto holines, and a constant fear of thee my God, that I may have respect unto all thy Commandments, and walk before thee all my days with a perfect heart. Quicken me also by the same

thy good Spirit to give all diligence in every duty (and chap. 9.
especially in **) that I may
grow in grace, and in thy favour, and daily come nearer
unto salvation and thee. And
forasmuch as I my self am unstable as water, preserve me
by thy power through Faith,
that I sall not from my integrity, nor depart wickedly from
thee my God. Especially keep
thy servant from his iniquity,
(or bis iniquities of ***) and
make me most watchful a-

gainst all those * occasions and wiles of sin, by which I have been formerly insnared. My outward condition, during all the days of my pilgrimage here on earth, do

thou order to thy glory and my own good: and, if it may be thy

* Here thou mayst have many private and proper reflections: and so generally wheresoever the same mark is set.

Part II. Chap. 9.

thy holy Will, grant, that it may be so far quiet and prosperous, as that I may serve thee chearfully and without distraction.

2. For others.

Be gracious also, O Lord, unto thine holy Church, and to this Church, especially. Watch over us daily for good: And be pleased to bless and preserve the King's Majesty, his Queen, and all the Royal Family. Grant that all Magistrates may be faithful both to thee and to their Prince and Country in their truft: and that all Ministers, of what degree foever, may be fober, watchful, fervent and fuccessful in thy work. Let the whole Nation, and especially this neighbourhood, grow in the true knowledge and fear of thee. Visit with thy grace † and bleffing all my + Relati-

Remember particular reflections and, if need, mentions.

ons,

ons, my + Friends and + Bene Part II. factors. Forgive and recon- Chap. 9. cile both to thy felf and me all mine + enemies. Comfort, relieve, and in thine own good time deliver all thy fervants t who are in any diffress inward or outward, and fanctifie both to them and me all thy dealings, caufing all things in the end to work together to us all for good, according to thy infinite Power and Wisdome, whereby thou over-rulest all events.

For which thy gracious. Thanksadministration of the whole giving. course of Nature, and the multitude of bleffings appertaining both to this life and that which is to come, which thy providence incessantly heaps upon all mankind, and particularly upon me thy most undeferving fervant, for ever bleffed

part II. fpecially may Heaven and Chap. 9. Earth ever Praise thee, for the redemption of the world by thy Son; and the knowledge of thee through him revealed in thy Word; and the mighty workings of thy Spirit thereby. And be thou pleased to accept of that praise which thy fervant hereby returns thee (as great as he can) for them all, and particularly, for this last nights 'refreshings, together with the comfortable restoring him to the enjoyment of day. Grant me thy special Grace, that I may spend my time to thy Glory, and may be all the day long in thy fear. Keep me that I fall into no fin, nor run into any danger. And accept thou this my morning fervice, and together me, who here devote my felf

felf to thee, through my Saviour Christ Jesus, in whose Part H.
Name I further pray, as by
him taught, when I pray, to
say,

Our Father, &c.

CHAP.

Part II. Chap.10.

CHAP. X.

A form of Prayer, made as the other, which may be used in our evening Privacy.

IN like manner the Christian having entred his Closet with some such ejaculatory or short prayer, as before directed to, and having read and meditated as in the morning, may, Ipresume, very prositably use, with such alteration as his condition shall require, and his discretion direct, the ensuing Prayer.

Invocation and Ado-

O Most Holy and Gracious Father, the searcher of all hearts; who seest my down-lying as well as up-rising, darkness and light being both alike to thee; who art near unto all my ways, and espiest my thoughts, while they are yet asar off. I have here here set my self before thee to Part. II. pay my evening homage, and Chap. 10. defire to present both my soul and body (as is most due)a living Sacrifice to thee my God, who hast made and redeemed both.

But most unsit, O Lord, are confessions. they to be to thee presented, of havinust every part of both being natu-corruption. rally corrupt and abominable, and nothing in me free from the loathsom defilement offin. My foul by nature but much more by customary sin, is desperately wicked, and all its powers perverse and bent upon evil My mind alienated from thee through the ignorance that is within me: My affections unruly and mafterless: My will full of enmity to thy Law, and enslaved to the service of divers lufts and pleasures. And as to my Body, in iniquity, O Lord, was I shapen, and in sin did

odid my Mother conceive me: Chap. 10. And ever fince, have all my members been, as capable, ve-2. Of actual ry much servants unto iniquity and instruments of wickedness. With my whole man have I long obeyed the Law of fin, and fulfilled the defires of my flesh and corrupt mind. I scarce can think of that fin, in which I have not had my hands one part of my time or other. In sin, O God, have I spent not only my vainer age, and the days of my ignorance, but my ripest years, and those of fullest discretion, which I have yet attain'd to. Since the light of the Gospel hath shone into my opened eyes, fince thou haft touched my heart with a fense of that evil, which there is in fin, so wicked and perverse a fervant have I been, that knowing my Lord's will I have both neglected

neglected to do accordingly, and presumptuously done con- Chap. 10. trary unto it. To the very present time, O Lord, how f frequently, and how fadly do I backslide ? What † liberty do I allow my felf? How t heedless do I converse? I walk at a mere peradventure with thee my God. Notwithstanding all my vows and promiles of watchfulnels unto obedience, this very day how little hath thy fear been in my heart? and from hence comes it to pass, that I have so miserably departed from

thee (by ***.) With what stripes therefore do I deserve to be beaten? And, how righteous a quarrel against me hath not only thy Justice, but thy very Grace and Mercy.

* Here confess any of the miscarriages of the day, which thou hast been supposed to have taken natice of in thy meditation.

F 2

Not-

Part. II. Chap. 10. Perition. 1. For our felves.

Notwithstanding, O Blessed Father, give thy poor creature leave to befeech, and let me prevail with thee not to take that advantage against me, which justly thou maist: Rather, now thou hast born fo long, break my heart by this thy goodness, and make thy forbearance and long suffer-ing to lead me to repentance. Vouchsafe unto me thy sanctifying spirit: Let it fill me with an holy shame of my former ways: And let the fense of my own unworthiness towards thee beget in me an holy indignation against my self, a pailionate and constant zeal by future diligence, as far as is possible to redeem and repair some of my lost and most sadly mis-spent time. Let my heart be never void of a stedfast purpose of serving thee in the every known duty, (especi-Part II.s ally of ***) and careful a-

voidance of every fin. (*) And having thus given to will, do thou of the same thy good plea-

* Here put in any thing for which thou findest occasion.

fure give also to do, following the preventions of thy Grace by the continual assistances thereof, so that I may proceed from one vertue unto another, perfecting holiness in thy fear, and keeping a Conscience void of offence towards thee and all men.

And this my cordial purpose, and perseverance in endeavours of pleasing thee, do thou through the blood of my Saviour graciously accept, laying not to my charge any of my former sins, nor visiting upon me, either the neglects,

F 3

Part II. Chap. 10.

or transgressions of my duty. At least, however thou shalt here deal with thy fervant, in the last day acquit me of all guilt, and through the merits of thy Son let me obtain remission of all sin, and an inheritance in thine everlasting Kingdom. In the mean while, as to the necessaries of this present life, give thy servant what thou pleasest, and what thou feest best for me, even food convenient. Thou needest not, O God, my service; but accept my ambition of being serviceable unto thee, and bless me both with strength and opportunities for it, and, if it may be thy holy will, with fuccess therein.

2. For others.

Father, I pray unto thee alfo for all men (forasinuch as thou art a God, who would'st have all to be saved, and to come

come unto the knowledge of hart II. thy truth) especially for all Part II. Chap. 19. and every member and members of thy Universal Church, and for the particular Church of this the Land of my nativity: For the Kings Majesty, the Queen, and the whole Royal Family, for all that are in authority, for the feveral Stewards of thy Mysteries, the Ministers of thy Gospel (for him in particular to whose overfight thou hast committed me): that thou wilt give unto them all, according to thy most gracious pleasure, the blessings both of this Life and that which which is to come, especially fuch measures of thy Spirit, that every shoulder may be fitted for its burthen, and all amongst us may faithfully serve thee, according to their feveral degrees; fo that this whole F 4 Land

Chap ic.

Land may be bleffed with abundance of prosperity and peace, io long as the Sun and Moon endureth. Forget not peculiarly to shew mercy unto the † relations, † friends, † helpers, † and well-wishers of thy fervant: Reward, I befeech thee, all their love; and † forgive, good Lord, divert, and put an end unto all others malice or enmity. Let thine eyes be ever open upon, and the bowels of thy compassion be moved towards all thy wanting and fuffering fervants: Support them under, and graciously deliver them out of all their diffresses, and let the end be peace, and righteousness, and bleffedness for ever.

Thanksgivinge

Thy fervant will speak yet once more, and praise thee for thine infinite love and compassion to that miserable nature,

of

of which he (or she) is a parwe had all lost or corrupted it, the knowledge of thy felf, both by the light of Nature, and most clearly by thy holy Word; in sending thy Son for our redemption, in appointing the Ministry and Ordinances of thy Gospel, and pouring out thy holy Spirit to turn us from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto the kingdom of thy Son. O God, I particularly bless thee, for the knowledge which I have of thee in my Saviour Christ Jesus; for my share in him; for any measure of thy Grace on me vouchsafed; for the comfortable hope which through thy Son's blood I have of pardon and eternal life; for this days life and protection for the with-holding (or he F. 5 moving

moving those several judg-Part II. Chap. 10. ments which my fins dechap. 10. ments which my fins deferve, (***) for the loading me with a multitude of most

*** Here praise God for any particular deliverance, saying, (especially for **) undeserved blessings (especially for **) Encrease upon me thy Grace evermore; and make me thankful by proving a faith-

Petitionary ful Steward of all thy mercies.

Let that Eye of thine, which never slumbreth nor sleepeth, which hath been open upon me this day, watch over me this night. Let nothing disturb or make me asraid. Let none of the sins of the day lye down with me, nor ever appear against me. Vouchsafe my body due refreshment, and let my soul have her songs in the night. Keep both from all works of darkness: and let me be ever with thee, O Father, both here

here and hereafter, through Part II.
The Son my Saviour Christ Chap. 11.
Jefus, in whose name and words. I further pray.

Our Father, &c.

CHAP. XI.

Some further Directions touching the use of these Prayers. Objections of want of time, of want of privacy, considered; and Provision made in such cases.

In these or the like words may a devout Christian, I presume, not unfitly pour out his heart before God, morning and evening. But it is to be remembred to what end these forms were prepared, and the use of them directed to, to wit, to be a provision against raw, heedless, imperfect, broken, confused, and diforderly Prayers: of which, dulness, distemper, or distraction, may make

Part. II. Chap. II.

even the devoutest Christian to be guilty, if he always trust to his extemporary faculty and readiness.

Wherefore it is not the intention of the present direction, to tye even every one that shall use these or the like forms ever to them, but only commonly, or as his Christian prudence and fobriety shall judge it best suiting with his devotion and present temper: So then, if at any time a Christian shall find his mind more ready and present than ordinary, fo that he can fay in Holy David's words. My heart is fixed (or, prepared) O Lord my heart is fixed, and he feel a certain overflowing of affection ready to come over his foul, he is to esteem this a time, when God doth as it were bespeak somewhat more than ordinary, to that purpose offering, and giving him to feel already, more than ordinary affiftance; and by fuch special moving of the waters secretly fignifie, that he hath some healing benefit or refreshment then to communicate unto the foul. Wherefore let him yield himself to the

Malm. 108.

the leading of the Spirit, and by no means let flip that holy season of Part 11. a more free and large effusion or pouring out his foul before God: Always in the mean while remembring that he duly prepare himself, by fome fore-going meditation, according to what hath been already in part spoken, and will hereafter be more fully considered.

And this practice, I presume, as it fo far binds a man up, that his devotion should not be loofe and slighty, fo it allows him (1.) fuch liberty, as may duly exercise and improve any spiritual gifts which he conceives himself to have, and (2.) Such variety, as that there is no fear, that custome or treading always the fame track (I mean repeating the fame words) should make him guilty of formality and deadness.

If there be any Objection now lying against this proposed course in our devotion, it is as far as I can fee, one of these two; either (1.) that it will take up too much time; or (2.) That those who for the general canufe it, yet at all times cannot

find.

Part. II. Chap. 11. find opportunity for it, as of privacy when abroad, &c.

But as to the first case objected. we have already supposed our pra-Aist to be such, who lives somewhat above a fervile life; and therefore may spare some part of his time, which furely he cannot fpend to a better purpose, or upon more beneficial employment. And it will undoubtedly be found true by him, who shall fet himself upon this practice, or put his devotions into this mold, that when he is once but got into the way, and fetled in it, the performance of all will cost him less time by much in a day, than hath the reading of these directions. An hour in a day (or very little more) being divided into equal parts, and balf taken in the morning, half at night, may, after formemoderate practice in this way, very well. fuffice: and they are either very full of imployment, or exceeding bad husbands of their time, who being at their own command cannot afford fo much time for fo necellary a work. (Not to fpeak that fome part

part of this work may be reckoned a kind of studying, and that as be-Part if. Chap. 11. speak to. Consider, man, which is of greater concernment, thy foul's. or thy bodie's welfare? Which is longer, threescore years and ten, or Eternity? Canst thou therefore only find time to provide for the more unworthy?

The latter opposition of want of privacy, when abroad, is more or less considerable according to the accommodation and entertainment we meet with abroad, which sometimes is such that it gives us no less. opportunities of privacy than we have at home. Then, as to the utenfils of our devotion, A Bible is easily got in the house; a Note-book in my pocket (out of which when I come home I may transcribe into my Memorial or Accomptal any thing which I judge fit) is no great burden: no more is my prayer-book, if occasion be. So that in this case my devotions may be complete. But suppose I be cast into a chamber amongst company, and those fuch

Part II.

of fuch whom I like not much for o verlookers of my devotion. In this Chap. 11. case, supposing my company to be persons who will either scorn me and my religion, or disturb me, it is better my devotions be less compleat, and private, than more full and open. Now totally hindred of privacy I cannot be. I can make or pretend(and that without a lye) litle common necessary business or occasions, which may call me out; while I can enquire into my felf, and power out a short prayer to God, walking or otherwise. And God, no doubt, will accept my devotions, when as perfect as I can, although not so large or complete as I would.

> Now for better Provision against fuch fraits of place and time as these supposed, or other like which may occurr, the two following forms may not be unferviceable.

A Form of a Short and Hasty Morning Prayer.

Part. II. Chap. 11,

God, my Health, my Life, my Happiness and Portion for ever. I most humbly adore and worship thine unseen, but all-seeing Majesty, blessing thee that thy good hand has raised me, again to cast [or, as occasion suffers, to bow] my self at thy sootstool.

Thou, O Lord, art Gracious, and Holy, and Blessed: but I am vile and abominable, and deserve to be most miserable: as having avery corrupt Nature, and an Heart further depraved by a Multitude of sins, most truly mine own, more in number than I can recount, and of more grievous guilt than I am able to set forth; yet, what is my only support, not exceeding

Chap. 11.

ing thy Mercy in Christ Jesus my Saviour.

In his Name I come unto thee; and for as much as I defire to turn from all my fins, both at present and for the future, and to go mourning all my daies for what I cannot now prevent or recall; I most earnestly beseech thy pardon through my Saviours Blood, and thy Spirit, both to purge out of my heart all the old leaven of naughtiness, and replenish it with the Belief, Love, and Fear of thee my God; that I may daily grow in Grace, and be fruitful in all good works, glorifying thee my Heavenly Father. Grant, O Lord, I may ever cleave unto thee, and follow hard after thee, and in the end be ever with thee. Keep me this day watchful against mine iniquities.

ties, the fins which eafily be- Part II. fet me. Lead me in the way Chap. 11. that is good: Defend me from all Evil, and supply all my wants, as thou feeft best for me.

Hear me also for thy Holy Church Universal; for ours in particular; for our KING and all Governours under him, as well Sacred as Civil; for the whole Body of the People; for all my Friends and Benefactors, for my Relations and Kindred, [especially for &c.] for all who are distressed. O thou All. fufficient God, be thou a shield and fuccour unto them all: And in the unity of thy Church, guide me and all thine by thy Counsel, until thou bring us to thy Glory, through Jefus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

Another

Chip. 11 Another like Form in facts cases, for Evening.

> Father of Lights, with whom is no darkness, who never slumberest nor sleepest; I frail Creature, to whose support thou hast made fleep necessary, being now about to go to my rest, humbly fall [or bow] down here before thee, and worshipping thee, desire to close this day with thee, and in thy peace and fear.

> Thy good hand has carried me through the Business and Dangers of the day; and bleffed be thy Holy Name, thy Fatherly care and loving kindness for it. Thou, O Lord. art never wanting unto me, but I am wanting evermore to thy Grace and my felf. How many

many have been this day the Part II.

Errors of my waies ** How Chap. 11. have I come short of thy glory, and my own Duty? [In **] I do, O God from my Soul bewail all: Now behold me I befeech thee in thy Son Christ Jesus. In him, O Lord, Hear, O Lord, Forgive, and cause thy Face to shine upon thy Servant. Lay me to my rest sprinkled with the Blood of him my Saviour, in holy joy and peace, and in the comfortable hopes of a Blessed Resurrection at the last day. Make my fleep this night fweet, and holy ; and when I awake, let me still be with thee. Ravish my Soul with thy love, and enlarge my Heart in longing de. fires after thee, and ferious delight in thee, and in the holy company of Heaven. Prepare me,O Lord, for my long fleep;

Chap. II

or do but grant unto me that I may be found watchful, and preventit, if thou pleasest, with

thy coming.

Gather together, O God, all thy Church, and till the fulness thereof shall be come in, purifie, pacifie, and defend all parts of it. Let thine Eyes be ever open for good on this part of it into which thou hast cast thy Servant; and especially on him, who under thee, is the Defender of it. Keep, guide, and govern him, and all who in Church or State govern under him. Bless and reward my Friends: Pardon and turn mine Enemies. Help the Helpless, Receive into thy protection this night me and all my Relations, &c. Keep us all good Lord unto thy Heavenly Kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

Thefe

These Prayers are so short as that they may be easily committed to Part il. memory, and fo will become the readier and fitter for use in any of the supposed Exigences. But let them not be an occasion to Idleness or Spiritual Negligence.

That winds dens we was world be greater on Holy-days; then or linear days. The end A Feller la con Plain Pas Fand Car

Part

follar upon Holy clays or Festie vel we ought to be more taken up in devotion, then on other dies into it comments in exclusive

Part III. Chap. I.

PART III.

Of more folemn Retirement into the Clofet upon Holy-days and Sundays.

CHAP. I.

That private devotions should be greater on Holy-days, than on ordinary days. The end of Festivals, and their Vindication from abuse and Cavils.

That upon Holy-days or Festivals we ought to be more taken up in devotion, than on other days, there is no men 1 presume will

will deny, except they be so factious as to slight the Institutions, or so senfual as not to understand the end and

design of them.

It is as uncharitable as unreasonable a Part to conclude, because they bear the name ordinarily of certain Saints and Martyrs, that therefore the days were superstitiously consecrated to the mere honour of those Saints. The design of the Church in this Institution seems to me only thus much.

First, That Almighty God might have particular glory for all the particular parts and degrees of the work of our redemption (the Incarnation, Circumcision, Passion, Resurrection, &c. of our Saviour:) as likewise for all those his Servants, by whose Do-Etrine and Examples, whether in life or death, his holy Gofpel hath been planted and confirmed. Then, 2. That there might be due commemoration of such particular persons, and of the graces in which they did excel, as well to the end, that their examples (at least) might be an immortal incitement to vertue, and they

Part III. Chap. 1. they being dead might yet thus fpeak; as that vertue might have its deserved honour, which for the enforcement of like worthy practices upon others, comes not at all too late, though it be given to the ashes of the vertuous.

And that these two, to wit, giving particular honour to God, and the propagation of vertue, were the main aims of the Church, seems to be undeniable, if we do consider either the particular Collects on those days, or that clause in the Prayer for the Estate of Christ's Church Militant, towards the end, (We biess thy name for all thy ser-vants departed this life in thy faith and fear, beseeching thee to give us grace to follow their good examples, &c.) which prayer, we know, is one part of the Service of the Church upon every Festival, and both this and the forementioned Collects exprefly profess as much as we affirm.

Now these, as they cannot be rejected by any fober men, (and fo the end being right, and the power just,

Chap. 1.

just, and the thing it self as just, (which two last, because I see no Part III. reason for the questioning them, I let pass without any other proof, than the evidence which they carry with them) it cannot be feen how the institution should be amis, wherefore the factious have an anfwer:) fo they are directly frustrated by those, who look upon Festivals as merely a time of Liberty, and fo many days devoted to pleasure or idleness. I will not fay, but that both the Church and State, in fettling these Institutions by Law, might have some aim at allowing fervants, and those who live a servile life, some rest and time for lawful recreations, which fometimes the covetousness of some Masters, sometimes fome persons own covetousness would not allow them: (And this is justifiable even by the practice of God himself in the fourth Commandment, that thy servant may rest, &c.) But that it was never either the Churches or States intention, that they should wholly be fpent to this purpose, I do affirm: G 2 and

Chap. 1.

Vid. God. de Feriis.

and for proof hereof, at home, alledg Part. III. our Laws, which enjoyn all on fuch days to refort to places of publick worship for the service of God; and abroad, the Imperial Constitution. We will not that Holy-days, which are consecrate to the supreme Ma-jesty, be imployed or spent npon pleafures. And it would be a right pious work, and as much for the vindication of Festivals as any other, if Magistrates would according as I am fure they may, punish those, who use to spend whole Holy-days in their pleasures (dancing, hunting, runnings, foot-bals, &c.) by the legal mulct for absence from Divine Service.

But may no recreation then be taken upon Holy-days? I do not fay, nor intend that: nor doth, I prefume, the Law, neither new, or old. For the rest, and (if by the rest we will understand any thing but a dull idleness) the refreshment of labourring persons being one thing which by the way was designed in their Institution, plain it is, that lawful recreations, as they are exercises of

refreshment, may on them be used. ~ But as to fuch recreations, which Part III. fhall supplant or thrust out the whole Chap. 1. Service of God on those daies. which fervice is the main end to which the Festivals were ordain ed. I fee not how they can without fin be frequented, practifed or tolerated: I am fure our Ecclefiaffical Laws tolerate them not.

Further, I presume the sense which the fourth Commandment in common equity bears, enforceth as much as I press: For that enjoyning a Jew to sanctifie the seventh day. that is, the time which by their Law was fet apart to the worship of God. will also (at least) in equity and reason enjoyna Christian to sanctifie fuch times, as their Laws have confecrated to the Divine worship: which Laws touching the particular fetting apart of times to the worship of God, though they are not all extant in Scripture, nor immediately delivered by the mouth of God, yet being made by them, whom he, to whom all power both in Heaven and Earth was given, hath commiffio-

Part III. Chap. 1.

missionated and made his delegates (to wit, his Apostles and their fuccessors, the governours of the Church) cannot be looked upon as altogether humane, but have a certain stamp of Divinity; according as ordinarily we interpret the commands of the King's officers, in fuch things wherein they are commissionated, to be the Kings commands. Now, that Holy-days were ordained by the lawful governours of the Church, is too evident to be denied. And, I should not fear to say, that fome of our present Fealls were at the least observed by some of the * Apostles, our Saviour's immediate Substitutes. How therefore can

Vid. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. 5. cap 22.23. & de vita Const. 1.3. c. 17. & c.

Act.20.16

that is, not imploy them to these const. 1.3. separate uses, to which they were appointed (which is the meaning of fanctifying in this regard, in Scripture) without the unhallowing body or devoted things, or without the evident breach of this Commandment?

we neglect to fanctifie fuch times.

which are thus confecrated to God.

I will add no more to this purpose,

pose, but that every one being bound ~ to proportion his time for his devo- Part IIL. tion, according to the opportuni- Chap. 3. ties and leifure which he hath, and it being unlawful by the very municipal law, or law of the Land (for fuch is the Ecclefiastical law in this cale) totally to follow the work of my calling on Festivals or Holydays, I cannot but have more leifure on them for the service of God: and therefore confequently a greater portion of it is to be spent in my devotions. Which being concluded, as most lawfully and rightfully it may in general, what hath been faid holds as well concerning private as publick devotions. I ought therefore to think my felf bound on every Holy-day to somewhat more of devotion in private, than what every day calls for.

Part III. Chap. 2.

CHAP. II.

What there should be of new in our private devotions upon Holy-days.

THE question now will be, what that is of new, which Festivals may seem properly to require of a Christian in his Closet-devotions.

To which it must be said, that as to the general substance of my devotions, it can scarce be other at any time, than what hath been already delivered, to wit, Reading, Meditation and Prayer. But yet each of these may be imployed a while upon some new specialty, or particular matter which that day's occasion and solemnity directs unto, to wit, upon the life or vertues of that particular Saint or Martyr, whose memory the day celebrates: or if the day be such which was intended only to praise God for fome particular transaction relating to our redemption (as the Nativity of our Lord, his Circumcision, &c.)

to bend my devotions thitherward. Part III. To this purpose it may be proper, Chap. 2. besides what I read in Holy Scripture that day by my constant course, (which should not at any time, except upon evident necessity, or very considerable business, be broken) to read those particular portions of Scripture which are by the Church appointed for that day; I mean the Epistle and Gospel for the day. And these being read over with such care as is before prescribed, to spend fome time according to the former rules in Meditation upon them: and then, either to my own prayers to take in the Collect of the day, or to add fome other petitions and praises, as my Christian discretion shall judge seasonable. To this imployment if I allot an hour (or if need fo require half an hour) befides what I ordinarily on other days spend on my devotions, the work may in some good measure be done. And it cannot be thought, but so much time may well be spared, by reason of that leisure and rest which the Law on that day en-CHAP. joyns me. G.S

Part III.

CHAP. III.

An Exemplification or practice of the former rules in Christ-mas-day, with a sit Prayer to be added to my ordinary Prayers upon that day.

given will be better underflood, and rendred more easily practicable to the plainest, if a little
exemplified, a pattern or two shall
be set down of what there should
be of new in our devotions on Festivals, and those so framed, as that
they may serve not only for instances in this last case, but for examples of practice to those formerly
given rules touching Reading and
Meditating.

And first for such Feasts which celebrate the memory of some particular in, or step to, our redemp-

tion.

Amongst these the copy shall be in Christmas days. (The Epistle Hebr.

Hebr. 1. ver. 1. to ver. 13.) Which having carefully read over, I cannot Part III. but observe (according to my first Chap. 3. rule in Meditation) that the holy Ghost's design is to express the glory of our Saviour, and especially his eminence above any, and all the Angels (which are yet the most glorious part of the creation) And this glory of his is expressed to be fo eminent, not only in respect of his Divine nature, as he is the express Image of his Father's person, but also as he is God-man, as having been born in our nature, and purged our fins, he fat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. So that the very humane nature of our Saviour, how ever contemptible it might feem once to be, is now advanced infinitely above the Angels, all the Angels being to worship The incarnate Son of God, And his Throne being established for ever.

Now there being in all this no. confiderable matter of difficulty which offers it felf, I have no need here to apply my fecond rules (touching fearthing into difficulties); and

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Part. 111. Chap. 3.

therefore I proceed to the third, to consider what I am the better for having read this. The substance of it I have already gathered in the practice of my first rule: that reviewing, to gain light to the particular parts, I find by the fecond verse my self instructed and confirmed in that point of my faith, the. Eternity of the Second Person, or the Son's being from everlasting: For it is faid that God by his Son made the Worlds, that is, (as I may probably conclude) all things that are. His Son then was before the Worlds, that is, from Eternity.

Again that admirable expression (the brightness of the Father's glory, and expressimage of his person, upholding all things by the word of his power) what a glorious representation is it of the Son's Deity, and being distinct but not separate from his eternal father? according as the brightness of glory may be conceived as distinct from the glory, of which it is the brightness, but never can be apart

from that glory.

Again that following expression

(after he had by himself purged our sins fat down at the right hand of the Ma-Part.III. jesty on high) with what an heavenly Chap. 3-emphasis doth it set out,

i. The fulness of the atonement made by Christ as to every faithful person: by himself he purged our sins: and how can they not be pure before the Father, whose sins his only Son by himself has purged?

2. The transcendency of our Saviour's glorification (He fat down at the right hand of Majesty on high) What a bleffed (#40 or) height is here to express it! and how doth the very expression affect the considering mind! he sat down at the right of the Majesty on high: methinks I could fay it an hundred times over with new admiration and dissolution of soul. It fecretly infinuates also, what shall be our future glory, when we shall be like unto him, and sit down with him at the right hand of the same Majesty. More of the same nature might be noted, but this is sufficient to exemplifie the Rules.

I proceed now to consider the Gospel which I also am supposed to have read. (Gospel, John 1.ver. 1.

134

Chap. 3

to 15.) The scope and substance of this Gospel seems to be this, that our Lord Jesus being God, ever blessed with the Father, in time took upon him our nature to redeem us; and that John the Baptist was a witness hereof.

But here are feveral expressions which feem to contain fome matter of faith touching our Saviour, and yet I do not perfectly understand them. Wherefore if I have any help (as before directed to, by the fecond Rule 'touching Medication apon Scripture) I confult that touching this whole portion of Scripture. Which having consulted I may be supposed in some colerable measure to understand what is contain'd therein necessary to be believed. If I have no fuch book or help, then I must make as good shift as I can and confidering the fcore and drift of the place before mentioned, and every particular expression at which I flick, I interpret that which I doubt of, with a regard to, and by the light I can take from, wha derstand. Thus having the g .cope

scope of this Scripture in my mind, I review it, or consider it again in Part III. the order as it lyes. Nothing do I Chap. 3. recet with, which I do not in a good measure understand, till I come to ver. 4.85. (For having observed at the first reading, that (ver. 14.) the Apostle saith the Word was made flesh, by the Word in the 1. verse I can understand nothing but the eternal Son of God) In him was life, and the life was the light of men. What life? or how is the life the light of men? I consider that the holy Ghost is here speaking of the Deity of the Son, and in the third verse ascribes the making of all things to him. Then it follows In him was life. It is very likely that the meaning hereof is thus much. He is the fountain of life, he made as well the things which live, as those which do not. He communicated life to all living. And the life was the light of men; It is very likely, that life is here to be understood of that natural life, which all men whatfoever live: for he speaks of Christ as the Creator of all living. Now whereas

Part. III. Chap. 3.

it is faid, that this life is the light of men, or that that life, which men do partake of from God, is light; haply the meaning hereof may be, that the life which the Creator gave to man was a more lightfome (that is, a more intelligent) life, than what the rest of living creatures here below partake of; to wit, a rational life. Now it follows, The light shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. It is very likely that by light I must understand in this verse, what I did thereby in the former, to wit, Reason: and as to the next word, whose meaning I doubt, namely, Darkness, considering darkness is opposite to light, I enquire with my felf, what in man is contrary or opposite to Reason, and I find Sense, or Sensuality to be its opposite, so that weighing all more attently, at length I guess, that fome fuch thing as this is the import of that verse.

The natural light of man's reason shone, in his corrupt and sensual nature, but that nature followed not the dictates of it: Men rejected what

their

their reason would have guided them to chuse. And this, being Chap.3. that I was led thereto by confidering the drift of the words, and find now that the words will to my best judgment very well bear, I conceive may probably be the meaning of this Place.

But here it may be very necessary to admonish, especially ordinary people, that they proceed not too far upon their own judgments in interpreting darker places of Scripture, of which, this haply may feem one. We have only, in what we have faid, shewn the best way, which can be taken for the finding out the sense of Scripture. But if so be, that using this method I particularly could not have found out fo much touching the sense of this Scripture. as hath been above declared, yet had not either my reading or my meditation been fruitless. I could very well and very profitably have rested in this, that I observed these verses to testifie to me, that Christ is God, and by him all things were made; and that from him

him came life, and all the light, Part. III . which in life men have. And thus Chap. 3: much by observation, a plain person might have found from hence. But usually I say, plain persons will do best, not to trust the strength of their own reason, which commonly is none of the best Judge of consequences and dependances, but rather get to themfelves such helps as above directed to, and follow their wholfome guidance.

> Well: having found out as I conceive thus much of the meaning of this Scripture, if there be any thing else I doubt of in that part of it which remains, I proceed to consider it, carrying still in my mind the scope of the whole, and thus much as I have learnt of the fense of the former part. The substance of the remaining part feems to me thus much, That when it pleased the Word to be made flesh (that is, the Son of God to take upon him our nature, and in that nature to dwell) John the Baptist was sent for a witness to testifie, that this was the true light, to the end that men might believe

lieve: And to as many of mankind Part. III. as did believe upon, and receive Chap. 3. this light, this light (himself being the eternal and natural Son of God) gave the priviledge, right or power to become through him the Sons of God, being now born unto a new (viz. a godly) life by their receiving him. Now here it may be (as I look through the particular verses) are one or two things more of moment which I doubt of, and touching which I will confult the best helps I have, or otherwise consider with as much attention and modesty as I can.

First, In what sense should Christ

be termed the true light?

This confidering of, I remember, that before there was mention of a certain light which all men did partake from the Word as created by him (to wit, their Reason) and this light, though it shone in them, yet, as the first man did not follow its Splendor, so the rest did reject its guidance; and the darkness received, or comprehended it not. But now it is faid, that the word, that is Christ

made

Part III. Chap. 3.

made flesh is the true light: both which considering together, the import of all seems to be this, That whereas the natural light of reason, being not comprehended, but rather overcome by the darkness of man's corrupt nature, was insufficient, of it self, to lead man unto his salvation or true happiness, and being sophisticated by the same corruption, had led him to seek happiness in many false and by-paths; Jesus Christ came into the world to shew the true way to happiness, and so was the true light.

From whence also I begin to see somewhat into the second passage which I doubted of, to wit, what should be the meaning of that [as many as received him]: For, considering how the Evangelist in the verses immediatly foregoing speaks of Christ, to wit, as the true light, I easily see, that to receive him is to imbrace him as the light, and so to apply my self to those holy wayes which he hath discovered, alone to lead unto happiness. Which also the following words further intimate

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them that believe in his name that is them who by their imbracing the discovery which he hath made, and doing accordingly, do manifest that they are persuaded he is the true light: which thing they do, not as they are born by the will of man, of sless and blood (for the darkness comprehendeth not the light) but as begotten, or created over again by God hereto.

So then now I conceive I understand the Gospel for this day, and all the most concerning particulars in it. The substance of it therefore I recollect after this my fearch, to the end it may fink the better into me. and I be the better verst hereafter in this Scripture. And that is this. That Christ being eternally God, was also together with God (with whom he ever was) the Creator of all things, and particularly of man; that man in his recreation received a certain light (viz. his reason) which he opposed and overcame, rather than followed; that therefore it pleased Christ to be made man, and coming into the world to discover

142

Part III. Chap:

discover the true way to happiness unto degenerate man; and as many of mankind, who embraced this discovery, and manifested their belief of Christ's being the true light, by their receiving him as such, he restored into the blessed state of being the Sons of God (as Adam was before his fall.) And of all this John the Baptist was sent before to be a

Luk. 3.38. the Baptist was sent before to be a witness, that by his testimony men might be prepared to believe in this

true light.

Thus much then I am improved in point of knowledg. But is there nothing which may be further useful to me as to practicals? No promise of mercy? No threat of punishment to any? Nothing to quicken me to any duty? There is surely.

First, That is a remarkable expression, As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the Sons of God. I cannot expect ever to be by my incarnate Lord made a Son of God, and Heir with him in the Kingdom of his Father, except I receive him as the true light, except I look for happiness by the method

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by him delivered, a holy Christian practice, according to his Gospel. I Part III, see therefore hence the necessity of Chap. 3. being conformable to all the Commands of the Gospel. He is Salvation to none to whom he is not light; If therefore I am not faithful, meek, charitable, holy, Oc. as the Gospel directs, salvation it felf will not save me.

Further, Both the Epiffle and Gospel put me in mind of what the day celebrates, the Incarnation of our Saviour (at leaft his vifible Incarnation, for to the eye he was not Incarnate till born.) Word was made flesh, and so himfelf spake unto us, and by himself he purged our sins. The Word, who was that? The Som of God, the brightness of his Father's glory, the express Image of his person, he who was ever with God and ever God, heir of all things, by whom all things were made, he was made flesh: O the depth of the love of God and Christ! Whose foul can well hold to contemplate it?

Befides this admiration, and diffolution of foul, the thoughts hereof cannot Part III. Chap. 3. cannot but be thus further useful to me.

First, Seeing from what an infinite Glory, to what a mean nature and condition, the Son of God (himself the infinite God) stooped for the help and saving of men, I cannot but see my self in duty bound to the like humility, meekness and condescention; not to stand upon mine own petty interests, and consult nothing but self, when I have opportunity to do good to any inferior that wants my succour. Had Christ done so, he had never been made self for me. Now let the same mind be in me, which was also in Christ Jesus.

And again, Seeing to what an height of excellency the nature of mankind is now advanced, it should prevail with me to put a due price upon it, and never willingly to dishonour by any unworthy action, what God himself hath so honoured. Did God stoop to vindicate my nature from the contempt and tyranny of the devil, and shall I notwithstanding all the condescentions of his

grace

grace, still wilfully enflave and de-

itrov my felf?

Further, God having united the nature, of which I am a partner, to him, I should be ambitious of all means of uniting my felf to him, that is, of doing all that may be on my part to further this union.

And especially, the thoughts hereof should quicken me this day to a zealous participating his body and blood. Can I confider God made flesh for me, God debasing himself to be one with me, and is it possible that I can neglect, what is fo much for my honour and interest, the means of being made bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh? How can I esteem my self duly to have celebrated the memory of his being made flesh, if having means of partaking of that flesh which he took, I neglect it? And how much of ingratitude most such neglect have in it?

Laftly, Seeing that one great end of our Saviours being incarnate was, to be the true light to man in the pursuit of his happines, let me acPart.III. Chap. 3.

count

Part III. Chap. 3.

count it a noble degree of assimilation or being like my Saviour, If I can in the least measure be a light to any herein. And if God have by office made me such, let me prize and honour my imployment, and manifest my value of it by my diligence in it. The more light I give, the nearer do I in my office come unto my Saviour.

Thus much then of incitement have I hence to my duty. My other rules are not here so applicable: Wherefore in the conclusion of my Meditations, I consider what of new all that I have meditated, doth suggest unto this day's prayers: And that I shall Praise.

find to be matter of ? Petition.
As to the first,

1. The infinite goodness of God, that he would at all think of restoring that nature, which was now an enemy to him, having wilfully fallen from him, cannot, if duly considered, but melt my heart into thankful praise of him.

2. That (yet) greater commendation of his goodness, his infi-

nite

Chap. 3.

nite condescension, his redeeming our nature in a way fo glorious Part III. to it, as was the assumption of it unto his own nature, methinks should overcome my foul, and wrap it into an extalle of praile and admiration. In all likelihood, infinite wifdom might have thought of a course, which would have been less honourable to man, and would not so much (if I may so speak) have humbled the Deity. But he would not bring us to glory ingloriously. The mere confideration therefore of the honour which our Lord's Incarnation puts upon our ill deserving nature, will not fuffer me to be filent this day in his praises.

And as to matter of Petition, furely it cannot but be right feafonable to befeech, 1. That all this may not be in vain unto me: And 2. That to that end, I may transcribe these Copies of goodness, humility, and purity, which shone in our Saviour's Incarnation, and walk in the light, as well of his example, as do-Etrine. And all this I may do in some

fuch words as thefe.

Part.III. Chap. 3.

A Prayer to be added to my other daily Prayers on Christmas-day.

God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; who out of thy mere goodness and pity, having promifed thy Son to redeem faln mankind, didst in the fulness of time faithfully perform with thine hand what thou hadst spoken with thy mouth, and fend him into the world made, and as about this time born, of a woman: I, one of that redeemed, though vile nature, humbly adore this faithfulness. Grace and thy Eternity, Lord, is too little to bless thee for it. But Eternal praise is the greatest that I can wish thee: and mayst thou to Eternity receive due glory for this thine infinite Goodness and mercy.

O thou the only begotten Son, by whom thine eternal Far Chap. 3. ther made the Worlds; who wast ever with God, and ever God, the brightness of his Glory, and express Image of his Per-Son, yet wast pleased in time to be made flesh, and pitch thy Tabernacle in our nature: I, part of the purchase of thy blood, poor dust and ashes, (but such as thine infinite Glory was pleased for my sake once to wear, and now to glorifie, and fet above Angels) most humbly bless thee, as well for this thy condescension, as for the honour done to man. Thou tookest not upon thee the nature of Angels, but the feed of Abraham thou didst take. Even so, O Saviour, for fo it hath seemed good to thee. Thou thoughtest not the Angelical Nature low enough for thine Infinity to H 3 floop

Part III. Chap. 3.

stoop to. Most dear Jesus, thou hast overcome me. I would praise thee, but I cannot further. -Accept my filent ravishment, admiration, and faith. I believe,

Lord, help my unbelief.

O Holy Spirit, the power of the most High, who, after an voconceivable fort overshadowing the Virgin Mother, didst frame in her facred Womb that

* That is, was the Son of God. For in Scripture many times being called and being (wordandthing) are one and the Same.

Holy Thing, which * was called the Son of God; for this thy most wonderful and fearful (but to man mosthappy)operation, I unworthy man most humbly blefs thee: befeeching thee to in-

fpire my heart, that I may from this bleffed Copy transcribe these Vertues of Goodness, Humility, Love, Purity, and whatfoever else mine holy Saviour, either by his Life or Doctrine hath taught me: that fo Part III. Chap. 4. I walking in his light, he may be to me life everlasting, to the praise of thee, O Father. Son, and holy Spirit, one undivided God Eternally. Amen.



CHAP. IV.

An Exemplification of the former Rules in St. Stephen's day: With a Prayer which may be used on any Saint's day.

OR the Epistle, Acts 7. v. 55. to the end. Which, having read, I find to be a narrative, or relation of St. Stephen's Martyrdom. And the chief substantials, that my thoughts fix upon are, that encouraging vision vouchsafed to him, in his entrance upon his fuffering, and the manner of his taking his suffer-H 4 St .. ing.

Part III. Chap 4.

St. Stephen, the first of those who were to pass to Heaven in the fiery Chariot of a violent death, for the witness of Jesus, was now as good as sentenced: for the defence, which he had made, had only further incenfed his perfecutors. But he, who should make the first tryal of so bold a passage, had need of some more than ordinary encouragment: It pleased therefore him, whose Witness he was, to command away the Clouds, and through the opened Heavens to shew himself standing at the right hand of God, ready to receive him thither. And feeing the passage now so clear, and the end fo glorious, it was not likely that good Stephen should stumble at a Itone or two. This method doth the eracious providence of God observe, that where he gives a bitterer cup, there he secretly provides greater enconracements, and thereby raiseth the strength of his foffering servants.

Answerable to his encouragement do I find St. Stephen's carriage. For being cast out of the City, and now to be stoned, all is so far from

daunting

daunting him, that it scarce seems to have disturbed him; for he readi- Part. 111. ly prays to his Saviour both in his Chap. 4own and his Murtherer's behalfe. Particularly, these vertues I cannot but observe livelily shining in him

fuffering.

1. Constancy, Resolution and Christian Magnanimity in those sufferings, which a truly Christian cause ingaged him in. 2. Notwithstanding all his extraordinary affurances of glory, (Christ witnesfing it to him from Heaven in that bleffed Vision) perseverance in earnest prayers to the last. When the stones now struck him, he called upon God and said, Oc. 3. Quietness, patience and ferenity: The Inju-flice of his sufferings exasperates not his Spirit, nor puts him in any paffion or indisposition for his duty. 4. Meekness, Charity, Forgiveness, even towards them, who in that they were enemies to him, were enemies also to Christ. He kneeled: down [an expression of the solemnity of his Prayers] and cryed with a loud voice [an expression of the earnestness H 5

Chap. 4.

nestness and fervour of them. 7 Lord Part III. lay not this fin to their charge, A petition of most discreet piety, and zealous charity. All make up a pattern most worthy imitation in suffering.

A double benefit then the fubstance of this portion of Scripture (recollected according to direction) yields to me. The first an Antidote or Remedy against dejection under,

and flavish fear of suffering.

If God at any time call me to the bearing a greater weight of affliction than ordinary, let me not basely or finfully decline it, but rather remember what St. Stephen (and indeed all the Children of God have found by experience, that strength shall be given in proportionably. and that fuitable to my mifery shall comfort and refreshment come to fustain my spirit, if I nobly engage. Secondly, St. Stephen's example is to me a copy how I ought to fuffer. Hence should I transcribe, Constancy, Dutifulness, Patience, Charity, and whatever other vertues I can observe him to have excercised in his fufferings.

Now

Now as to particular expressions ~ here, that which concludes the re- Pirt III. lation cannot well pass without Chap. 4. notice. And when he had said this he fell astep: In sweetness and love he breathed out his foul; and dying fo, pity it was, but that to so sweet a foul death it felf should be sweetned, and so it was : He fell afleep. It teacheth me how I am to look on death. To all men death is but a fleep: good or bad, they must awake from it. But a good man's death should be look'd upon only as ' a falling afteep, or as another Scripture faith, Resting from his labours: Death is much the easiest to good men.

Of these notes or remarks, which a I have thus in my Meditations on this Reading made, those which I have a mind chiesly to fasten upon my self (though I would not forget any) are these which follow, of which therefore I register in my Memorial some hints, perhaps so as follows.

" St. Siephen's day, 1664.

w Verfe :

Part. III. Chap 4.

"Verse 54, 55. God ever pro-"portions his Servants comforts "to their fufferings.

" Verfe 60. He fell afleep. How " fweetly do good men die! Also "a fit Petition to use when I pray "for enemies; Lord, lay not this fin to

" their charge.

" I noted all along in St. Stephen " these Christian Graces. 1. Con-26 stancy and Courage. 2. Perseve-"rance in prayer, notwithstand-"ing the immediate revelation of his instant Glory. 3. Patience. " 4. Charity and Forgiveness.

This pattern will serve for direction in what we ordinarily intend; and it is brief, because it is supposed a pattern to be followed in what we in daily course observe or set down. But if on Holydays, any have a mind to be larger in their setting down their Meditations this hinders not.

The Gospel, Matt. 23. v. 34. to the end.

Observing the scope of this Scripture, I find it to be a prophecy of the difmal calamity, which should befal the Jews by reason of their wil-

ful

ful rejecting of the Gospel, and cutting off them, who were sent to Part III. preach it, according as their stubborn fore-fathers had cut off the Prophets. A judgment should befal them, which should be in some measure a proportionable revenge of all the righteous blood, which had been shed from Abel to Zachary: Ver. 35. and this by reason that they did perfift in shedding such righteous blood; as they indeed did in case of our Saviour, and his persecuted followers. Their City therefore should become a desolation. and the very worship of God being laid waste, they should expect the Messiah so long, that they should even bless him, that could tell them any thing of him.

This is the general substance of this Scripture. Difficulty in it I find none to stop me: I proceed therefore to inquire, what of advantage I can make by the reading of it according to my proposed course: And, 1. I find my felf, by the obferving the two first verses of it, much fatisfied touching one case, in

which.

Chad.4.

which I have many times thought God to deal very hardly, to wit, touching his visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children. Verse 35. It is faid, that upon that generation should fall all the righteous blood spilt from Abel to Zachary, which, at the first look seems very severe. But the reason is rendered ver 34. because of the Prophets, wife men and scribes, which Christ sent amongst them, some they would kill and crucifie, some scourge in their Synagogues. others persecute from City to City, according as their forefathers ever had ferved the Prophets: Which gives me ground to conclude: That children seldom or never inherit their fathers punishments, or the wrath due to their fathers fins, but where they first prove inheritors of those sins: And in this case, because commonly they have feen or heard of as well their fathers fins, as the punishments which have befallen their fathers for those fins, and yet not mended by their Examples, it is but justice, that their fathers fins should be visited upon them, that is, that they

they should have the same or like punishments as their fathers had, Part III. and greater.

Then, z. I cannot but note; how flowly and unwillingly God comes to judgment. Thus much those words, O ferusalem, ferusalem, fuggest to me. Our Saviour, I see, cannot foretel this desertion and rejection of the Jews without a lamentation taken up, O Jerusalem, Jerufalem. So unwilling is he to punish, that he even weeps at the very thoughts of it. This is a very affecting confideration, and of special force to quicken me to repentance, and is therefore to be noted to that purpose.

Laftly, Examining further, according to the rules proposed, whether there be no instance of God's judgments against sinners, no threat to deter me from any fin, or the like, I find there is, and cannot but stay my thoughts a while upon this heavy denunciation of woe against those, who were outwardly God's own people, for their rejecting the offers of Grace, and upon foolish

prejudices

Part II. Chap. 4. Rom. 11.

prejudices not acknowledging, or not being willing to fee the light. which yet they could not but see.

And if God spared not the natural branches, how much less will be spare me, who am only grafted in out of the wild olive, if I be guilty of the same fin? It concerns me therefore in this case to look into my felf: the very reading of this Scripture ought to be to me a warning. And let me see: Am not I guilty of the like resisting light and rejecting grace? What do I else when I in presumptuously, and only not wilfully? Do not I then that mine eyes against the light and offer violence to the convictions which come from those Scriptures, whose Authors, the Jems were rejected for offering violence unto? They rejected their living testimony: I, not only that (for that I have recorded in the Scripture); but the very voice of their blood, by which they fealed the truth of their testimony. Oh sinful and ungracious wretch!

Now if any such as this be my case; let my meditations here rest a while. Let me consider whether

in this Scripture, which hath thus convinced me of my fin, there be me. And truly there is. 1. (That Chap 4which bath already been mentioned, God's unwillingness to punish, his patience and forbearance. And hath not this been great towards me? How often have the warm offers of love and pardon invited me, as they did them? May not I fay, God would have many a time gathered me under his wings? And do not these very warnings, that if I am not reclaimed, I must be forfaken, speak God's present unwillingness (if any thing will work) to for fake me? Is not this as much as an O Jerusalem, Jerusalem? A-gain, 2. I here see that though God bore long with his people, he would not bear always, being that they did perfift in reliftance of his Grace, And truly I know not how foon God may call home from me his opposed Spirit, and fuffering his Grace no longer to be abused, leave me, as he did the Jews, in my own stubbornnessand wilfulness to perish. After

After this fort may I imploy a Part. III. while my thoughts; and if time Chap. 4: will fuffer, thus ought I so long to meditate, till my moved heart have taken up full resolutions of following the guidance of Gods Spirit, and yielding to his Grace. And these warnings or convictions from the word, together with my resolutions upon them, should I (if able, register in that other of my paper Books, which I call my Accomptal, or if not) take such solemn notice of, that I forget not. But if any necessary matter force me to depart my privacy, before my meditations arrive at fuch a ripeness; yet let me not fail to take notice at least of the warning which I received (and fet that down in my accomptal) that fo upon my * fasting day, when I review the actions of that week, I may be fure not to forget it, but to humble my felf for my former miscarriages, and consider for the future, how I may turn my feet into new ways.

* See Part IV. Chap 4.

But to return to the devotions

of this present day: So much only remains now to compleat my pre-Part. III. fent meditations, as to consider, what of new from all will be feafonable to be added to my accustomed Prayers. And here will be,

Firft, Matter of confession, toucking my refifting Grace, and not walking according to the light

which I have had.

Secondly, Matter of praise,

1. For these warnings, which are fo many calls to repentance, and in-

vitations to happiness.

2. For the testimony which the Gospel received, and doth to this day receive, by the doctrine and death of St. Stephen, and for the constancy, faithfulness, patience, charity and meekness, which shone forth in him.

Thirdly, Matter of Petition,

1. For grace, that I may from henceforth yield unto all motions of God's holy Spirit. 2. That when ever God shall call me to suffer (as he doth frequently by the crofses, oppositions, frustrations, &c.

which

Partill. Chap. 4. which I meet with in the course of my life, and may do by more fevere inflictions or trials, at least Death one way or other will come,) I may manifest the like meekness, patience, charity, holy resolution and mindfulness of God, by prayer and all other seasonable duties. All which having confidered, how I may in fome fober and orderly way express or represent before God, let me either insert in my wonted prayers; or in some short prayer to be added to them comprise as well as I can. A pattern whereof very particular it will not be fo expedient to fet down here; but rather fo to frame a prayer with some respect to the foregoing heads, as that it may in general be accommodated to, or used upon the Feasts of any Saints or Martyrs.

Part III. Chap. 4.

A short Prayer, which may be added to our ordinary Prayers, upon the feast of any Saint or Martyr by our Church appointed to be kept.

O Lord, the God of truth and holiness, who at sundry times, and in sundry ways hast revealed thy self unto the world, by thy holy Prophets of old, and in these last days by thy Son, of whom thou hast since in all ages raised up thy Saints and Servants to be witnesses: I humbly bless thee, as for all the revelations of thy will, and confirmations of thy truth; so especially for the testimony given thereunto by the life,

Part III. (b) death, of thy fervant Chap. 4. St. [S.] whom thou madest

(a) The word Doctrine is chiefly to be used upon the feasts of the blessed Apostles.

(b) If the feast be not the memorial of a Martyr, the word death is to be left out.

unto the world not only a witness of thy truth, but a pattern of holiness: and I beseech thee to pardon both all my opposing, and all my holding in unrighteousness those truths, which either he or any other of thy ser-

vants have preached, or left on record. I acknowledge and bewail my guiltiness herein: Keep me, blessed Father, for the future (at least) from all such presumptuous sins; and grant that the same Spirit resting upon me, which dwelt upon thine antient Saints, and Ser-

vants

vants,may beget in me the like vants,may beget in me the like humility, charity (**) dili-Chap 4. gence, resolution and perseverance in all holiness. Let me, as they, both in life and death glorifie thee according to my measure, so that amongst those heavenlyHosts andtheblessed Society of thy chosen,

* Here insert the mention of any Christian vertue, in which thou hast observed the Saint. whose memory thou celebratest, toexcel.

I may have fome (though it should be the lowest) place eternally to praise and enjoy thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one most glorious God. Amen.

CHAP.

Part III.

CHAP. V.

Of what remains to complete my private Festival devotions, to wit, Almes-giving.

Ome time, besides what my ordinary course requires, being thus fpent in Reading, Meditation, and Prayer, fuitable to the partilar regard of the day, it only remains to complete my devotions, that according as God hath bleffed me, I fet apart somewhat for the poor; for it is not certainly my felf, or my rich neighbours only, which I am to feast upon Holydays: and however, it may be, I cannot give in my Closet, yet I may in my Closet, and at the end of my devotion most conveniently, chearfully and religiously (and it may be, most liberally) consecrate, what I can spare, to such pious use, by separating it from the reft, which I reserve for ordinary uses. fomewhat every Holy-day would I caft

cast to have thus to consecrate to God, though it were the less: By Part III. the observing this course I shall commonly, if not always, have wherewithal to relieve the wants of fuch, whom I meet with and find to be truly indigent; which, if I do not use my felf to some such method, I may haply many times want a stock for. Whether to di-Aribute it in money, or in that which is bought with my money, and may be more fuitable to the wants of those whom I relieve, a little Christian discretion will easily direct: and the more to enforce this practice, let me confider how naked, miserable, and stingey, solemn Thankfgiving is, without fomewhat of Almes-giving. Then furely I rejoyce in a way most becoming the mercies I and mankind have received, when, as many as I have wherewithal conveniently to help, have cause to rejoyce for my rejoycing: and on the contrary, if being able (by doing but what is my duty, at least what I well may) to revive poor and disconsolate persons, I suf-

Chap. 5.

Part. III. Chap. 5.

fer them (through my close-handedness) to groan under their distresses upon days of publick joy, what a blemish is it to those days joy? and what want of Christian goodness and charity doth it bespeak in me?I should rather be greedy and ambitious to make all the

world rejoyce with me.

Now, for the making at least thus much of Alms-giving an act of my private devotion, no one will, I prefume, be diffatisfied, who either considers the premises and the nature of the thing, or what our Saviour faith touching this matter, Let not thy right hand know what in this case thy left hand doth. Let therefore, I fay, my charity crown my devotions: and as I put out that (what soever it is) which I have to devote unto God for the relief to his wanting fervants, it will not be amiss to use some short ejaculation directed unto his all-feeing Majesty, by which I may express my chearful offering it unto him, that is my fetting it apart for the poor, whom be hath commanded me to fuccour, and

Mat. 6. 3.

Private Devotion.

and promised me a bleffing if I consider. Now, that may be done in some Part. III. fuch words as thefe.

171

Lord, whose is the earth and the fulness thereof, I offer unto thee (what, by thy gift and bleffing, I have) this imall testimony of my thankfulness and duty, to be bestowed upon those wanting ones, whom thy providence shall give me opportunity to relieve. Be thou pleased through the blood of my Saviour to accept it, and pardon all my vain expences, Amen, Amen.

The using some such course, as this proposed, will make me more liberal in these my acts of charity: for how can I offer niggardly to this my bountiful God, when I am conscious to my felf, I have somewhat considerable, (if I will well husband all) which I may devote to him, and

yet

Part. III. Chap. 5.

vet not abridge my felf or mine, either of necessaries or conveniencies: and hereto I shall be the more quickned, if I remember I offer to God, who both gave me, and keeps account of all I have, and has promifed to reward openly what ever good he fees me do in fecret. Now whether I may upon fuch a day meet with opportunity to my mind, or fuch a person to bestow it on, as the discretion of my charity could wish, or whether I cannot, yet let me account it really given to God, and therefore separate it from the rest of the store; fo that ever after I may look upon it as devote, and not to be touched, except to distribute it to the poor; for I have really, by the prayer above made, devoted and confecrated it to God. But if any fatal necessity should constrain the medling with any part of ought thus separated, let me religiously observe to return it again to the poor mans purse or stock with an expiatory usury, that is, with fomewhat more, which may make recompence for my first diminishing it.

it. And thus we will leave the private devotions of Festivals, and con- Part III. fider in the next place, what will be Chap. 6. meet to be performed on the Lords day.

CHAP. VI.

That the Lord's day ought to be kept holy, and what that means.

Ouching the observation of the Lords day, though I judge them indifcreet friends unto it, who refer the institution of it mainly to the fourth Commandment; yet I put the keeping of it holy fo far out of all question, that I cannot but account him very unchristian, who either is flighty herein himself, or goes about to possess others, that they may be so without sin.

(1.) The natural justice of the The thing, that there should be some fantifying time fet apart amongst the Christi- the Lord's an community for the publick and day summed folemn worthip of God; (2.) The up. 16.

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Part III. Chap. 6.

antiquity and authority of that Apostolick Canon (recorded partly in express terms in Scripture, and (if it were not) sufficiently manifest by their practice) which hath fet apart this time: (3.) Our Saviours honouring this day with his refurrection thereupon, which gave occasion to its being fet apart; (4.) The custom of all Christian Churches through all ages, and from the very Apostles days; (5.) Nay the practice of our Lord himself on this day, meeting his assembled Disciples; are all of them arguments beyondcontradiction, and warrant (fufficiently) divine, that it is to be esteemed consecrate or fet apart to the worship of God. And then the force which the fourth Commandment in equity bears, that what time is fet apart or confecrated to God should be fanctified, that is, spent to those separate purposes and intents, for which it was fet apart (which I fay is the meaning of fanctifying or keeping holy any time) sufficiently and beyond all evasion enjoyns its being kept holy; it being supposed once to be fet

fet apart, as it is before proved to have been. And certainly if as is Chap. 6. undeniable, it be the duty of every Christian, as much as may be, to keep all his life as a perpetual Sab- Heb.4-10batism or holy rest unto God) it must needs be an argument of a very profane, wordly, and unchristian spirit, not to afford God this day free from fensual pleasures, and wordly cares or labours. Wherefore, I fay, the keeping holy of the Lords day, I put out of all question, and would have no man flatter himfelf, that he is a devout Christian. who useth, either by idleness or pleasures, or unnecessary wordly business, to prophane what Church, and being that the Church hath done it by good warrant and power transmitted to her by Christ) God himself hath hallowed. Profanation I call it: For if the spending. it to holy purposes be to fanctifie it, then the spending it contrarily upon ordinary or unworthy practices, is to prophane it. And if we may not give that which is holy unto dogs, it is then furely most intolerable to take.

Chap. 6.

take that time, which by divine Law ought to be hely unto God, and give it to his enemies, the Devil, this World, and our own Lufts; which we do, when we fpend the Lord's day either in idleness, pleasures, or need-

less wordly matters.

Works of Charity or Mercy are acts of Holiness; and works of Neceffity, fo far forth as they are works of necessity, are acts of mercy; and confequently the doing of either of thefe (that is, works of Charity or Necessity) when due occasion calls me thereto, is rather fanctifying than unhallowing the Lord's day (especially if I do them out of duty towards God, and in his fear) and for this I have his warrant, who tells me, that he better accepts

Mat. 9. Mercy than Sacrifice. 13.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Part III. Chap. 7.

Of Preparation for the Lord's day. A preparatory Prayer thereto.

C'Eeing then that the Lord's day is to be kept holy, that is, to be fpent in the worthip and fervice of God, for which it is fet apart, it concerns me to confider how I may spend it in a way most complying with this its design or intendment. And I Thall easily, upon the very consideration of the nature of Gods. worship, be convinced, that it is in a manner impossible for me duly to fanctifie it, if I come unto it hot and reaking from my wordly busifiness. For, being I am to worship. God in spirit and in truth, with all my mind, foul, and strength, and, in a word, with my whole man, evident it is that I am unable fo to do, while my heart yet remains unemptied of the world : And being unfit to worthip God, I am not, while fo, in a IS due

Part. Ill. Chap. 7.

due state to sanctifie this day. Wherefore the right fanctification of the Lord's day is to begin with

Preparation.

And it is truly a wholesome institution, that upon the Evening before it, there should be prayers in every Parish Church, which is grown now too much into disuse, by reason only (that I can imagine) of the degeneracy of the age. If there be fuch a custom kept up in my Parish, would not but upon necessity be absent from those preparatory prayers. At which though I should be supposed to have been present, yet would I not content my felf therewith: but, whether I have been imployed publickly in preparations, or not, in my course of devotion, on Saturday night, take fo much more time, than I do ordinarily, as might ferve for some preparatory Meditations and Prayers.

The least which I can do to this purpose in my Meditations, is, First, To examine whether there be not some fin or fad miscarriage of the week

week past, which lies unrepented of, and so may blast my next days per- Part. III. formances. And if any there be, fecondly, to confider of it more particularly, its aggravations, and nature, whether it be not fuch an one, part of the Repentance for which must be Reconciliation, Restitution, or fomewhat like : and accordingly to See Par. 4. apply my felf to what I in my con- Chap. 6. Sect. 4, 5. fcience, and in the fear of God, do &c. judge due repentance. Thirdly, to endeavour the emptying my head of wordly (at least distracting) cares, to bid them be gone now, till a day for them return: And lastly, so to contrive (as near as I can) all my affairs for the next day, that both I and my family may have as little avocations, or matters to call away our minds from holy duties, as may This by way of Meditation.

My Prayers must be suitable to my condition. If any fuch fin, as before-mentioned, be found, that must be confessed, bewailed, and pardon craved, together with grace for the future against it: which may be done by putting 'in the

z ention.

Part. 111. Chap. 7.

mention of that Sin in the pro-per space test for such purpose. But besides this, it will be necessary to add some particular petitions for due preparation or disposition of heart for the duties of the next day. First, for a quiet, fettled, and composed mind, so that I may attend, with all my foul, my holy concerns or business. Secondly, for enlivened affections, that I may not be dull and heartless, but of a tender and melting spirit. Thirdly, for a pliable, ductile, yielding and easie mind, that I may mix the word with faith, and render the obedience of Lastly, because both my faith. own and the Congregations benefit and edification much depends npon the Ministers due and affe-ctionate discharge of his office, it is therefore fit that I forget not him, but commend him to the affiftance of the Spirit. To which purpose the following prayer may either be inserted in some fit place towards the end of my prayers, or added to them.

Lord, from whom the Part III. preparations of the heart are, the day now approacheth, which being holy unto thee I am to spend in thy more folemn worthip. Many fins there are, by me not due ly repented of, which may justly bring upon me a curfe instead of a bleffing. [Espe-cially my [* *] may make my very prayers an abornination to thee. But accept thou, I beseech thee, of * Here insert the this my confession of mention of such them, and (at least defired) forrow for particular sins, which thou hast them. Turn my heart found thy self from them for the guilty of. future: and through the blood of my Saviour fo remove the Guilt of them. that they may not hinder good things from me. Let

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the effusions of thy grace both Part III. upon me and all the Congregations of thy people be ever plentiful. Let my heart be fixed, and none, either vain or worldly, much less finful thoughts lodge within me this night. Quicken me by thy holy Spirit, that I may draw near unto thee with a true heart. and be fervent in Spirit in thy fervice; and grant, that with a good and honest heart receiving thy Word, I may understand and keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience, and unto perfection. Remember thou thy fervants, who are to dispense thy Mysteries unto thy people: and especially him, upon whose Ministerie I am to wait. Pardon their fins and frailties; open their mouths, guide their minds and tongues, that they may deliver thy truths.

truths as becometh the Ora- Part III. cles of the living God: And Chap. 7. let thy work so prosper in their hands, that both themfelves and others may be built up in our most holy faith, to the perfecting thy Church, and the eternal glory of thy Name thereby, through our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus. A. men.

CHAP

Part. III. Chap. 8.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the true manner of Sanctifying the Lord's day.

SECT. I.

Generally before I go to Church.

Now as to my Closet duties upon this day, lest the folitary consideration of them by themselves, should breed any neglect, forgetfulness, or disturbance of the duties to be performed in the family, and in the Publick Assembly, it will be most expedient to consider the whole duties of that day, both publick, private and secret, and set down each in their natural order.

First then, as upon no day we suppose our Christian to be slothful, so least of all upon the Lord's day: but to be up in a convenient season, both himself, and, if any are under his charge, to see that they are so

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too. A convenient feason I call that, which every man's health Chap. 8. and occasions being considered, will agree therewith, and leave time sufficient for the discharge of the duties of the day. And supposing the publick service to begin generally about nine of the clock, between fix and seven will be a good hour, and all things being well ordered, may confift very well with most mens health and occasions. And of this time, which paffeth between my rifing and going to Church, if an hour be divided between the devotions of the Family and the Closet, so that half an hour be spent in the former, and the other half in my closet, it may do very well; and the common occasions of most houses being ensidered, so much time may be allowed by the chief (and perhaps most) of the family. If fo much cannot be afforded to this work, yet let some: and what day foever I dispense with double prayers (I mean prayer in my Closet, and prayer in my Family) yet this day let me omit neither.

Part. III. Chap. 8. It is a bad emen, or unhappy token, to begin the fanctification of the Lord's day by the breach of my ordinary course of devotion, and an argument it is likely to be but negligently fanctified by me. Besides, many in my family may perhaps make no other preparation for the worship of God, than what they make by joining in the family devotions: it will be therefore the more necessary to make sure of thus much.

SECT. II.

Of secret devotion in the Closet before going to Church.

Now my private devotions will be for the main the same this day as others. Only in my Meditations it is to be remembred, that I examine my self touching my preparations for the solema worship of God that day: and if any thing in my preparatory devotion be wanting (any sin unconfessed, unrepented of, &c.) in these my

my morning devotions, let that be done. And how compleat foever I Partill. Chap. 8. may conceive my preparations to have been, yet let me not in my prayers in privat that morning forget to fend up some petitions for preparing and affifting grace, to the end I may more spiritually go through the duties of the day: for the doing of which I cannot now want directions, after a preparatory prayer already considered upon. And these my Closet devotions will Chap. 7. be necessary to be first performed, for that they will very well fit me to perform my devotions in my family with more fervency: and befides, some of my family perhaps will not rife, till my being up has given them the Alarm; who therefore will have sime, to make ready to appear at the Devotions of the family whilft I am discharging my fecret Ones.

SECT.

Part III. Chap. 8.

SECT. III.

Of private devotion in the family before going to Church. A digression touching what our devotion in the family is alwaies to consist of.

These therefore being done, and it being now somewhat above half an hour till the time we usually go to Church, I am to call all my family (except in extraordinary cases of sickness, &c.) together to prayer; at which time all of them, who that day can go to Church, which should be as many as may be, should appear dressed as they are to go, that so after the family devotions performed, within a very short space we might all together resort to the publick place of God's worship.

Now if question be made, what the devotions of the family are to consist of, the answere is; they cannot well consist of less than these

two

two parts, Reading and Prayer.

By Reading here I understand Part. III. chiefly the reading the Word of Chap. 8, God: and that it is the duty of the head of the family either himself to read (or cause by some other to be read) the holy Scriptures in the hearing of the family, none can question, who considers those frequent Commands to the ancient people of God, to teach their chil- Deut 4, 6. dren the Law of God and his judgments &c. and dealings with them.

Now, how they can be taught those things by their parents, from whom they never hear of them, cannot be understood: nor will any reasonable person think these commands fulfilled by the mere teaching their Children the Belief, Lord's Prayer, and ten Commandments (though this most furely ought to be done); for we find of old, they were to acquaint their Children of God's wonderful works in delivering them out of the land of Egypt : And in like manner, are we Christians to teach our Children -Gods Mira-

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Part III. Chap.8: cles of grace, in freeing us by his Son out of the bondage of fin; which, how it can be better done, than as God has thought fit to teach it to the world, to wit by the Holy Scriptures, none will eafily find out.

Now for the method to be obferved in reading the Scriptures in our family, that which was above commended for use in the Closet may haply be most proper. And if I so order it, that I read the same portion of Scripture in my family, and in my Closet, it may be much for my edification, the double reading it will fet it deeper, both in my memory and in my understanding. But then, lest I read faster and more in my family than in my Closet, and for other reasons, it will be necessary that either my Closet-devotions go before my family-devotions (as before in part directed) or that at least I so contrive my readings, that what I last read in my Closet, I the next time read in my family.

Instead of Meditation which is

one part of my Closet devotion, if in my familie I use to examine my Part III. people, what they have learnt and observed out of what hath been read, and where none takes notice of what is mainly observable, there fuggest it to them; it may not be amis, provided it be done soberly (without a long deal of prate and meddling with curious matters)

and without vain-glory.

The Prayers, which I use in my familie, except upon some very eminent occasions may best be the Prayers of the Church. These are easie and best understandable: and the use of them in our families will fit the plainest people in our family to use them with more devotion and understanding in the publick. Notwithstanding I confess my judgment in this case to be, that the Injunction of them doth not in strictness reach to private families, but there is a liberty left; yet if we use that liberty only thus, so as freely and of our own accord to prefer the Prayers of the Church, I really judge (generally) it will be the best.

Some

Part III. Chap. 8. some particular cases there may be, as when any great judgment lies upon the samily, or the like, which may be admitted as exceptions to the general rule, and in which cases it may be expedient to use either other or more Prayers, than those extant in our Church Liturgy.

The general course then of my family devotions will be this, First, he who prays, begins with the last clause of that Exhortation thus: (I pray and be seech you, as many as, &c.) Then follows the confession: (Almighty and most merciful, &c.) The Absolution is to be left out. except he be a Minister who reads. Then comes the Lord's Prayer and Versicles. Which being done, all rifing give attention to one reading a Pfalm and a Chapter, or fo much of them as the chief of the family shall appoint. This being ended, if the Master of the family, or any by him deputed, will at that time examine, or briefly (as before faid) in-struct any touching what hath been read, here fuch examination will most seasonably come in: After which

which, he who reads the Prayers faying (Let us pray) all kneel Part III. down, and he begins with the Versicles, The Lord be with you, &c. and so proceeds with the Prayers in their order, as they stand, morning and evening. Added before the prayer of St. Chrysostom may be the Prayer or Collect for all conditions of men; or, the General Thanksgiving; or, in sit seasons, the Emberweek prayer, the prayer for the High Court of Parliament; for suitable Weather, &c. with other Collects, at the discretion of the Master of the Family.

Upon the Lord's-day in the morning, after the Prayer for the Bishops, Clergy, and the People, that is, just before the Prayer of St. Chrysostome, it may be convenient to add, for preparing grace unto all, the prayer in the beginning of the Communion service [Almighty God to whom, &c.] (or if there be any fitter in the Liturgy found) and that at the end of the Communion Service [Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings with, &c.]

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And in the Evening upon the

Part, III. Chap. 8.

Lords day, after the same prayer for the Bishops, &c. to add that prayer for fruitfulness by the word of God, which is in the end of the Communion service [Grant we befeech thee, Almighty God, that, &c.] Immediately before that Benedictory prayer, The grace of our Lord Je-Jus, &c. if all the Family rifing from their knees stand up, and sing some short Psalm of Praise to God, it feems to me a most meet and Chriftian closing of the day: Especially where convenient privacy of the dwelling reconciles fuch practice with Decency, and takes off the fuspition, or likelyhood, of ostenta-It is true, the Ordinary Metres, into which David's Pfalmes in this Kingdom have been turned, are (the best of them) very mean, and almost unfit for use, Publick or Private: But there are better Verfions extant; and however, even out of that old one, a discreet Chri-Stian (fuch as it is to be hoped, the Chief of Families are or study to be) will easily pick out, here and there, fo many verses, as may make a tolerable

lerable Hymn in the end of the Part. III. daies Devotions. As suppose, Chap. 8. Pf. IV. v. 6. to the end, or Pf. XCI. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. or Pf. 95. the fix first verses, or Ps. 103, the four first, with others. But still, as before said, let the Family be difmist and all shut up with the usual Benediction.

Thus much then as to the order of devotion in the family, both ordinarily and upon the Lord's day.

SECT. IV.

Of resorting to the Church.

Hefe devotions both in my Family and Closet being thus performed, it will foon be time to appear before God in the Church, And I am to account no celebrating of the Lords day like to that in publick, with a full Congregation of Christian people. Hither therefore I early, with as many of my family as possibly (at least conveniently) I can, refort, both my felf taking with me, if I can read, my Bible, and ComPart III. Chap. 8.

Common prayer-book; and feeing that the rest of my family, who can read, do the fame; And (especially if the way be long) I watch very narrowly over my felf, and those of mine with me, that our discourse be not vain and idle; much less purely worldly, so as to unfit our hearts: and as to my private felf, the fame care am I to have of my thoughts. Seasonable it will be, to think of the happiness which I enjoy, in that I come into the Courts of God, and feed upon the fat things of his House, and to praise God in my heart that I have fuch freedom of access unto him: in which case many happy and proper Ejaculations may I furnish my felf with, out of holy David's Pfalms.

SECT. V.

Of due behaviour in the Church.

Being come to the place, which is holy to God's worship, I enter it with all reverence, bare, if my Sex to require; remembring that though God

God be present every where, yet is he more specially in the places Part III. where his people are worshipping Chap. 3. him: and any postures of reverence. that I use there, are acts of worship unto his unfeen, but prefent, Majefty, and therefore cannot but be miltaken very much, if judged by any, superstitious. Having therefore orderly taken my place, I should (not out of custom but devotion) bon to God my buces, and beg his gracious presence and bleffing towards me, and the congregation of his people, that shall there meet that day, which I may do in this or the like form.

Lord, who though thou dwellest not in Temples made with hands, yet hast promised to meet and bless thy people wherever thou haft recorded thy Name; be pleafed to be graciously present to thy Servant here worshipping be-K 2

Part III. Chap. 8. fore thee, and to the Congregation of thy people, which shall here assemble themselves this day for thy worship. Pardon every one, who hath not prepared himself according to the preparation of the Sanctuary. Quicken us all for thy Name's sake; teach us to do thy will, and build us up in our most holy faith, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I know there are some, who object against this practice, but I could never yet see any reason in their

pretensions.

This therefore being done, if the Congregation be not yet fully met, it is not for me to imploy my felf in vain discourse with any of my neighbours: but either to meditate on somewhat which may be seasonable, or, if I can, to read.

And it may not be improper, till I am well verit in it, and know my

duty

duty therein well, to read the occo Church Liturgy, Rubrick (that is, Part. 116. the directions, which are mingled Chap. 8. with the prayers, for their use) and all; taking one day fome part of it, and another day another, till I have gone through it wholly. By this means discreetly used, I shall be able more readily to joyn with the Minister and Congregation in the due use thereof: But if the Congrega tion be fully met, and Service beginning, or begun, I am to yield all possible attention, remembring God requires my whole man, all mine heart, foul and mind, yea and my very body too: Wherefore fo I am to place and order even that (I mean my very body) as the worship of God, and the Churches instructions for the worship of that God, require; kneeling, standing, and answering still, wheresoever I ought. Nor am I to censure any thing, if I do not yet understand its use: for by so much as I do understand, I cannot but in a good meafure see the wisdom and pious intentions of the Church: By those an-K 4 **fwers**

Part III. Chap. 8. fwers, which I with the rest of the People are to make, I find my self much quickned, and my wandring heart many times called home; the use therefore of these as I should not omit, so should the benefit, which I have found by them, be an argument to me to conform my self to every other practice enjoyned, not doubting, but that all of them will in the end have as good an effect, as this upon me.

During the celebration of God's worship, if my mind at any time be run away from my work, I am as foon as ever I perceive it, fecretly to check my felf, to call it home, and in my heart faying Lord pardon and belp thy fervant, or using some fuch ejaculation to imploy my whole Soul as fully as I can about my busiremembring not only how ness, displeasing it is to God, but how unprofitable to my felf, to draw near unto him with my body only, and honour him with my lips, when Soul is far off.

Whatfoever I hear of the Word read or preached, I must remember

all along to apply unto my felf, not ~ carping at, or cenfuring the Preach- Part III. er, but taking all in the best sense, Chap 8. (Possibly it may be long of my sins he did no better, or so ill) nor looking fo much how it concerns others, as my own particular state and manners. And if there be any thing which more nearly toucheth and concerneth me, that let me be fure by fome means or other to keep or fet home upon my memory, perhaps there may be some place of Scripture cited to confirm, explain, or illustrate it; let me note that place, and the being able to find it may in case I am forgetful, bring the matter to my remembrance.

The exercises of divine worship being all ended, I am with the same reverence to depart the Church, with which I entred it (not rudely, hastily and disorderly, as the common manner of the multitude is) courteously saluting any of my neighbours, which I have occasion to salute, and that with inward love and good will: remembring that the ancient Christians had such an

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usage at their Assemblies, as the Kiss of Charity; it is but Christian Chap. 8. therefore for me, going out of the Assembly now dismist, to use a charitable and chearful Salutation to any of my Christian neighbours.

SECT. VI.

Of due behaviour between the Morning and Evening Service.

MY return with my family home should be with the fame gravity and care, with which was my passage to the Church: my talk, rather of what I heard or learnt, than of any worldly matter, except necessary occasions enforce the contrary. And being come home, one of my first businesses should be to stepaside into my Closet, if possibly I can, and there, according as I have found my felf affected, to apply my felf unto God. If I have been awa-kened to any duty, raifed to any hopes of God's favour, strengthen'd in any of my holy refolutions, informed of any thing touching which

I was ignorant, or the like, there briefly to blefs God for it: if I have Part III. been dull and unprofitable, there to Chap. 8. bewail it; both which may be done after this or some such fort.

Bless thee, O Lord my God, for the comforts of thy House; for thy awakenings of me to my duty; for any fostenings of my heart, and sense of thy love, or hopes of enjoying thee hereafter. Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, who am a vain, hard-hearted, finful wretch of my felf, but to thy holy Name be the praise. Now encrease, I beseech thee, this thy goodness to me; and confirm me in thy Grace evermore; Let me grow in the knowledg, fear, and love of thee; and any impressions thereof, which I have this day received, suffer me not to lose: Part III. Chap. 8.

lose; but enable me to bring forth fruit unto perfection, to the glory of thy Name, through Jesus Christ, my blessed Lord and Mediatour. Amen.

If this Prayer may not fuit with my condition, it may be prefumed, that as I have knowledge enough to fee it doth not, fo I have abilities enough in some tolerable way to represent and bewail before God my barrenness, heedlesness, worldliness, carnality, and whatever other great distempers I find in my foul, which accordingly I ought briefly to And this being done, let me recollect my felf, and view over in my mind those severals, which I have that day learned or been affefted with; for this will further imprint them upon the memory. Less than a quarter of an hour may fuffice hereto: and though haply fometimes I may fee occasion to allow more,

more, yet fo much fure I may afford at all times.

Having thus fastned upon my Chap. 8 spirit my spiritual gains, I now depart to my company for the necesfary refreshment of my Body, which this day was not appointed to abridge me of. Let me therefore be chearful, and eating my meat in singleness of heart, rejoice before my God: but let not my joy by any

means be wanton, idle, vain, or intemperate.

Of the rest of the time which paffeth between the publick duties of the day, the imployment ought to be facred, at least wholsome, and fuch which may not indispose me for the remaining part of the dayes and hereof much care is work:

to be had.

First, as to my discourse: touching which if it be the Apostle's precept, at all times to be observed, Col. 4.6. that our speech be alwayes with grace, seasoned with salt, certainly, in more special fort ought it to be such on this day. And though it cannot be accounted absolutely finful to converfe

Part. III.

Part. Ill. Chap. 8. verse about matters of secular concernment, if, occasion so require; yet 1. To be wholly taken up with these, cannot but argue a greater care of this world, than sense of Christianity; if so be there be any truth in that Speech of him who is infallible: Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. And, 2. To be needlesly medling with such affairs, or idlely bufying our felves about other mens actions and concerns (which are the ordinary fubject of mens discourses after dinner on the Lord's day) is at the best but a mixture of wordliness and vanity: and we ought to remember, it is made the character of naughty men, that their tongues walk through the earth.

Secondly, as to my Actions, care too is to be taken: It is not questionless unlawful upon due occasion, that is, on account of mine own or others necessity, or considerable conveniency, to put mine hands to an ordinary action, as is evident from our Saviour's both Dostrine and Practice: But as above said

cess lart.111. Chap. 8. വോ

of discourse, so now of business, to be needlesly imploy'd in worldly mat ters, and ordinary works, cannot but be some kind of profanation of the day, as being contrary to its fanctification; that is, being a fpending it to other uses and ends, than those for which it was fet apart. And albeit in this case no certain perpetual rule is to be fet, (the condicions of men being various) but each mans Christian discretion and piety ought to mete out to himself what he in his own conscience, and in the fear of God, confidering his occasions, judgeth fit (in which we are not one to judge another) notwithstanding I cannot think, that man takes fuch care of himfelf as he ought, or is duly cautious of indifpoling his heart for his duty, who can constantly suffer all this time between morning and evening fervice to pass over with him without any thing of devotion, either in his privacy or family, or just as the same time passeth over every day. This I fay, cannot be to fanctifie the day, because not to separate it from com-

mon.

Pare-111. Chap.8. mon, and to use it to distinct ends.

Soon therefore after dinner ended among all the family, it is meet that I call the younger sort, and set them to thelearning their Catechism; and as to the Elder, if I suspect any of them to be apt to trisle away their

time, let them be kept in my presence: and if all of them be able, let them read by course somewhat out of the Scripture, or some plain and honest book; if all be not, then such as can.

SECT. VII.

Of resorting to Evening Service.

Hen it is now almost time to resort to Evening service, let all be called together, to the end that all may orderly repair with me to the publick Assembly. And it may not be amiss (but right edifying) if some one person read a Psalm sutable to the present undertaking of going to worship God (such as is the ixxxiv. or the cxix. one or two parts of it beingtaken at a time as occasion or time shall serve) to which.

Pubate Debotion.

which reading all ought reverently to attend. And this being done, let Chap. 8. the same rules and directions which were given touching going to Church in the morning, be observed in the evening, and all as before refort to the publick worship. Which if they do, I and my family are now a fecond time attentively and reverently placed before God in his house of Prayer; where my carriage ought to be the same, as is before directed to. And furely unless I and my house apear thus the second time before God I cannot account my felf duly to fanctifie the Lord's day, I have done it only by halves. The Church was never in a fetled condition, but it had the Evening as well as the Morning Sacrifice; Vefpers as well as Matins.

If therefore any thing should so fall out, that I or mine are hindred from the fecond part of the publick duties of the day, it ought to be my grief and forrow, Pfal. 42. 4.

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Part. III. Chap. 8.

Of the duties after return from Evening service.

MY departure from the Church and my retirement as soon as I come home for about a quarter of an hour, or as I fee occasion, should be after the same fort, as in the former part of the day. Which being done, it will be expedient to come amongst my people, and see that all things are wifely ordered, that fo some time before night the devotions of the family may be performed. In the mean time both I my felf and as many of the family as can be spared from necessary services, are free to our private devotions. Only if there are any triflers, let them and the younger fort be dealt with, as before dinner, that is, kept where the people most commonly sit, reading and attending to the Word of God, at least for some certain space. Let them not fpend their time as they do ordinarily: for the Lord's day should took with another face than common days, all the day long. This

This care being taken of my felf and family, I fee not but my Christi- Part. III. an liberty permits me any honest re- Chap. 8. freshment, such as may be walking forth in my Garden, in the fields or open air. Only let me observe these cautions: 1. That my walk be some fuch as Isaac's Evening walk was, that my Meditations be good. Unquestionably I shall not find the fields an unfit place for good thoughts: There are many in the world, whom the very breathing the fresh air, the beholding the glorious light of heaven, the paffing clouds, the verdant earth, and smiling face of all things, transport into a rapture of devotion, affect very much with the admiration of the Creator of all things, make too to long for the time, when either they shall ascend above the clouds or visible heavens, or fee them pass away, and dwell ever with their God, beholding his facewithout any fuch interpolitions. And with much advantage may a man spend an hour thus, mixing often prayers or ejaculations with these his thoughts. 2. Another

Part. III. Chap. 8.

2. Another caution I should observe is, That I return fo early, as that neither my Devotions in my Closet nor in my family may be omitted. And truly most convenient will it be, that my own private devotions (which, being that I look on my felf bound to on other days, I cannot this day omit) be performed before the supper which I take: for then shall I be freshest, then will what I have learnt that day be better in my memory, than after the diversions which my supper and company may cause. Befides that, the performance of them will have fixed and prepared my spirit against any such diversions, and for the performance of devotion in the family. Which practice too on other evenings may not be improper, but pollibly, by reason of my constitution, convenient, if not necessary.

Now as to what I am this evening to perform in my Closet, it is the same, for the most part, as at other times. My course of reading must be the same: only, if so be that I see sit, the portion which I read larger. My medications (besides what

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is every days task) upon what I read, may take in a view of my carri- Part III. age that day; an enquiry what I Chap. 8. have learnt; a confidering fo as to affect my felf with it, and a fetting down a resolution to endeavour in all my waies a practice of it. My prayers may take in some new Confessions [of my unprofitablene f. bard-heartedness, unsetledness,] Petitions (for pardon, memory to retain, and grace to perform what I have learned;) Thanksgivings (for any quicknings of heart, resolution of holiness, any instruction, or improvement of my Christian knowledge, &c.) all futable to what in my Meditations I have found my estate to be: for the inferting or putting in of which, I shall easily find in my usual prayers fit places.

My Closet-devotions being thus performed, time it will now be for me and my family to take what Evening meal we use: which being done in some convenient time before we go to bed, (which ough not for many reasons to be too late Is I am a pious Christian, I cannot

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Part. III. Chap. 8. but look upon my felf bound to shut up the day in my family with some fuch devotions as I begun it with. Touching which, fome directions have been already given, as to Reading and Prayer: and it is only to be added, that I am to make some inquiry severally into those who are under my charge touching their improvements that day; to help out and instruct the ignorant, to rebuke, and that sharply, the negligent and heedless; to encourage the careful, as my Christian difcretion shall see meet: the properest place for which, will be either before the prayers begin, or just after the reading of the Scriptures, fo that the family may be dismissed, and the day ended with prayers.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

A Digression by way of Answer to some Objections against the Practice directed: And two Forms of Prayer, the one for Morning, the other for Evening, which may be used in the Family, upon the Lords day, or on any other great Festival, with little Alteration.

A Gainst part of the Practice, in observing the Lords day, above set down, I may meet haply with different sorts of men, who have entertained such prejudices, and will move such objections, as may, not a little startle and disturb me therein, except I be well resolved, and have maturely considered before hand.

First. As to taking account of, examining, instructing, and, as occasion serves, admonishing, reproving, encouraging the under-

part

part of the Family, by the Master Part III. thereof, or whom he shall appoint; Chap. 9. this somepeople will call Puritanism, Sabbatarianism, Fanaticism, give some such odious style unto. But I am to consider, that the World is very often abused by evil mens putting false names on things: And it would be very unreasonable in me, to forego my Duty, or cast off the means of my own, and Families Salvation, because a race of licentious and bold immorallists miscal both. I may obferve the Excellent Author of the Whole Duty of Man, whom none in their wits judge a favourer of Puritanical or Enthusiastical practices, very express in these particulars. Partition 2. Sect. 17, 18. 22, 23. 26. &c. And I know many persons of undoubted Learning, Solidity and Zeal for our Establish Church, who both agree with him, and particularly, practife thefe things themselves. Wherefore I am not to be moved by the bold Suggestions, no nor scoffs of Libertines, who pretend to be of the Church

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Part III. Chap. 9.

of no Church nor any Religion.

The same imputation, from like persons, I may hear brought against private Psalmody, or singing praise to God, in the Family: But if I look into the writings of the Ancient Fathers, whether of the Greek or Latin Church, I shall find that not only the Parlours, but Chambers and Beds of Ancient Christians, nay their very Work-houses and Fields, founded with Hymns to God and Christ. Such finging was not only their daily practice, but almost a Badge of Christianity. This then is no Puritanical Novelty.

Others perhaps of a quite contrary humour or temper I may fomtimes meet with, who are for Reading, and Catechifing, and Prayer, and Singing too in the Family, but (especially on the Lords day, and like times) would have other prayers there, than what have been above pitched on. They consider haply, that the Morning and Evening Service, as standing in our

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Liturgy,

Part.III. Chap. 9.

Liturgy, are to be the main employment of their Own, and Families Devotion in the publick Assembly on those days; and they think, and tell us they find, the double use of it flattens their Spirits, dulls their Thoughts, and Affections, such use being but a sudden doing the fame thing over again. Now it is to be confest, the Church does no where injoyn us the double use of the Morning or of Evening prayers: And though on Ordinary days, when the Family hears not Divine Service in publick, no prayers can be generally, with more deference to the Church, and more benefit to the whole body of the people, used in the Family, than the Church-prayers, though alfoa grown and folid Christian, may to the fame words, used again and again, still bring new Devotion, and fresh Affections, yet for the sake of those, who perhaps truly complain they cannot, and because it is not amiss to help Devotion, by all lawful and discreet Methods, of which some variety, at certain feafons

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219

fons, may be one, here is subjoyned a Form of a Morning and Eve-Part.III. Chap. 9. ning prayer, which may be used in the Family, on the Lords day, or on any other great Festival, or Solemn Day, with very little Alteration.

A Morning Prayer, on the Lords day in the Family.

MOST Glorious God, Invocation the alone Holy one, and Adoand Almighty Sovereign Lord ration. of Heaven and Earth; who wilt be glorified by, or upon all the Inhabitants of the World. Thou hast commanded, that we feek thy face; and thy Face, Lord, do we feek: We most humbly, with Soul and Body, worship before thy Majesty; desiring hereby withall to prepare, and fit our felves more folemnly, to worship thee in thine house of prayer. L 2

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2. ns Part. III. Chap. 9.

But who are we, O Lord that we should think to tread thy Courts, or approach the place, where thine Honour dwelleth! A finful people, laden with iniquity, a feed of Evil doers, Children corrupted, and corrupters; who have forfaken thee, the God of our Mercies, and walked after the Imaginations of our own hearts, and according to the course of this World, hearkening unto the Spirit, that worketh in the Children of disobedience. What Duties have we not neglected? And what fins almost are there, which we have not committed, in thought, word, or deed? We have long gone on, wearying our felves, and even thee, our God, with our repeated evils. Thou, out of thy tender compassion, hast called to us, and we have refused: Thou haft

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hast stretched out thine hand, ~ and we have not regarded. We Part III. have fet at nought thy Counfel, and would have none of thy Reproof. These things have we done, and thou hast still spared us, expecting if we would return, and waiting to be gracious: Yet have we not turned unto thee, the Lord our God, with all our hearts, and with all our Souls. Ah! which of us to this day can fay, We regard no iniquity in our hearts? If sometimes we seem to cleave unto thee, and follow after thee, of how thort a continuance is fuch our amendment? Our Righteousness is even as the Morning dew; it passeth away, and is not. But our fins, are ever about us, and still prevent us. We have throughout our whole lives fo accustomed our selves to the doing L 3

Part III. Chap. 9.

doing evil, to the love of pleafures, and of this World, that even when we would do good, how to do it, we find not. Thy commandments feem grievous, and thy Worship tedious, to our corrupt and carnal minds; And even when we do draw neer unto thee with our Lips, and Honour thee with our Mouths, how often are our Hearts far from thee!

Petition.

Yet in this deplorable state of guilt and depravation, whither can we sly, but to thee, our so long provoked God? On thee therefore, O Lord, do we cast our selves: To thee do we confess our sinsulness, and lay open our grievances, most humbly beseeching succour from thy Grace. Oh! turn away thine Eyes from beholding our polluted State, and let thy Fatherly Mercies

in Christ Jesus, be moved towards us, whom no power Chap. 9.4 but thine can help. In the bowels of compassion to us, be pleafed to fend down into our hearts the Spirit of thy Son, for the healing all evil imaginations, and inclinations in us, and rectifying our whole temper. By that good Spirit inlighten our minds in the knowledge of our duty, that we may clearly see what we are to do, and what we are to avoid, for the walking in all well pleafing before thee. Convince our hearts and Consciences of the necessity of having respect to all thy Commandments, and imprint daily more deeply upon them, the feveral obligations that Iye upon us thereto. By this means perfwade and bow our wills in all things, to follow a good Conscience. Strengthen all our

powers

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Part III. Chap. 9.

powers to perfect holiness in thy fear: And so sanctify us throughout, in Body, Soul, and Spirit, that we may be faithfully, and intirely thine unto Death; For which We befeech thee, daily more and more to prepare every one of us, by quickning of us to examin our Consciences, to prove our selves, to renew cur Repentance, to watch against all the wiles of Sin, and refift all temptations, whether from the World, Flesh, or Devil. Over all these, O Lord, by thy power make us more than Conquerors. And as to all the fins which we have committed, whether known, or unknown, whether new or old, vouchfase unto us a full and free pardon, through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom alone we have hope, and through whom we befeech thee

thee in thy good time, to grant us a bleffed Refurrection, and Chap. 9. an Inheritance amongst thy Saints, in Light and Glory Everlaiting. Mean while, O Blessed Father, according to thine abundant Grace, grant unto us, that all things may work together to us for good: And feeing that by thy most wife disposition, we know not the things, which shall befall us in this life, nor is it fit we should be our own choosers, whatfoever thou hast reserved for us, or shalt bring us unto, let us not only be therewith content, but from our hearts endeavour. in all conditions and circumstances both in life and death, to glorifie thee, and shew forth thy praises, who hast called us out of Darkness, into thy marvellous Light, and into the Kingdom of thy dear Son.

In

Part. III. Chap. 9. Intercession.

In whose name we continue our fupplications unto thee, for the whole race of Mankind; that thou, who wouldst have all men to be faved, and to come to the knowledge of thy Truth, wouldst enlarge the bounds of thy Church, and in thine own good time, fend the light of thy Gospel to those, who fit in darkness, and-the shadow of Death. Let Israel according to the flesh, look upon him, whom they have pierced, and return unto the Lord their God, and with them let the Fulness of the Gentiles believe and glorify thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. Defend, Purge, and Unite the Univerfal Church, and more particularly, these Churches of England, Scotland, and Ireland. Preferve, and with all the good things

things of Heaven, and Earth, Part. III. bless the noursing Father there-Chap. 5. of, our Soveraign Lord the King, together with his Queen, the Duke, and the whole Royal Family. Guide and govern his Counsellours, and all who govern under him, in the faithful discharge of their Duty, to the punishment of Evil-Doers, and praise of them that do well. Let thine Holy Spirit ever affift, and actuate the Ministers of thy Gospel, whether Bishops, Priests, or Deacons, in their whole Lives and Ministry, and especially such of them, to whose charge, thy providence hath committed us, that thy work may prosper in their hands, and the People be brought unto, and built upin, the most holy Faith of our Lord Christ. Vouchsafe unto all our Friends fuch mercies, as

thous



thou knowest them most to need; and, according to the same riches of thy knowledge and goodness, recompence all our Benefactors, and forgive all our Enemies. Be pleased to meet, and bless all those Congregations which shall this day be assembled in thy fear.

Carry us to thy house of Prayer and make us glad therein with the light of thy Countenance. To this purpose, remove before hand from us all vain and worldly thoughts; compose our minds,; open and enlarge our hearts, that we may attend unto those things, which shall be spoken, and so receive thy word, as to grow thereby. Let not any of the fins of the week past, or of our whole lives, interpose to hinder good things, the operations, and affistances of thy Grace towards us: But

grant

grant unto us, that in and Part III. through every part of thy wor-Chap. 9. ship, we may worship thee, who art a Spirit, in Spirit and in Truth. Keep us this day out of all Evil, especially out of all sin: Guide us in all good, and in the end even unto thy self in Glory, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has commanded us, when we pray, to say,

Our Father, &c

An Evening Prayer for the Same Day and Company.

Most Blessed God, the Invecation, Father of our Lord Je- and Adosus Christ, through whom thou ration.
extendest mercy and blessings to all the Families of the Earth; but art more abundantly Gracious in particular to the Families

milies that call upon thy name Part III. and worship thee in the way of thy commandments. We humbly bring our Evening facrifice of Worship and Homage to thy Majesty, again casting our selves at thy footstool, befeeching thy bleffing upon us, and defiring to close this day with the thoughts of thee, for they are sweet.

Confestion.

We must, O Lord, acknowledge, the Worship, we have this day paid thee, comes much fhort of what we ought; little time have we ipent with thee, or upon thy Service, in comparison of what we might and owe. We have been taken up too much in doing our own works, and finding our own pleasures, and speaking our own Words: Even in our Acts of Worship towards thee, how milerably have our hearts strayed

ed from thee! How heedless, part III. dull, and indifferent have we Chap. 9. been! A very luke-warm generation, and deserving to be fpued out of thy mouth! All these miserable distempers of our Hearts we must confess to be mainly due unto our felves, to the Carelessness, Excesses, abominable Practices. wherein we lived, and too often allowed our felves. Ah. Lord! With what grief of Heart, and confusion of Face, ought we to look back upon our past Conversation! And yet. alas! how unconcerned, how unaffected are our hard hearts: and that after follong a time, as thou hast vouchsafed us for repentance! Out of thine infinite Goodness and Mercy, thou indeed haft called us early to the knowledge of thy Grace and Faith in thee, yea, to the glorious

Chap. 9.

rious liberty of the Children of God. But we, one while have not been sensible hereof, and fince we have known thee, and this our high calling, we have not liked to retain God in our knowledge; we have oftentimes held thy truth in unrighteousness; we have yielded our felves Servants of disobedience unto fin, and, by innumerable misdeeds, slaves to divers Lufts and Pleafures. any of us are at present in some measure made free, and the chains of fin, wherewith we were bound, any whit broken off, we owe it to the power of thy Grace, to the unwearied strivings of thy Spirit, and to the sweet methods of thy Providence, for the delivering us out of those snares of the Devil. which we had run our felves into, contrary to the light and guidance

dance we have had from thee. Bleffed be thy name, O Lord, Chap. 9. that we have thus far escaped the pollutions of the world through lust. Now give us leave to befeech thee, that thou wilt perfect thy work in us, that thou wilt not cease, till thou haft brought forth Judgment unto Victory, till thou hastcaptivated all our hearts, and every thought and imagination of them, to the obedience of thy Son Christ Jesus, and to a full conformity to thy will in all things. Let that Grace, which brings Salvation, enable us, as we are taught, to renounce all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live Godlily, Righteously, and Soberly in this present World, as looking for that bleffed hope, and the glorious appearance of our great God and Saviour Christ Tefus

Chap. 9.

Jesus. Replenish our hearts with Faith, and with the Fear Love, and Honour, of thee, our God; with Justice and Charity towards Mankind; with Purity, Temperance, Meekness and Humility; with a fervent Zeal for thy Glory, and care of our own immortal Souls. And grant that we may not only persevere in these and all other the Graces of thy holy Spirit, but daily grow therein, and bring forth Fruit unto perfection, more and more, until we come to thine everlasting Kingdom. To this happy end, bless, good Lord, that portion of the Bread of Life, with which thou haft this day fed us. Grant, we may remember what we have learnt. and improve all the holy affections, and good purpofes, thou hast raised in us, and watching

watching against, and refisting all temptations, to the contra- Chap. 9. ry, press hard on towards the mark of the price of our high calling in Christ Jesus: In whose name, we befeech thee to be further Merciful to us, in the pardon of all our fins; all, which we have confessed; all, which we ought to have confessed, and even those which we cannot confess, because secret and unknown to our own hearts, but open and naked unto thee, who art greater than our hearts, and knowest all things. O Lord, let all of them be blotted out, and let us be found clothed with the Righteousness which is through the Faith of Christ, when those days of refreshing shall come, from before thy presence. Which time we befeech thee, we may ever live so mindful of, and prepared for.

Chap. 9.

for, that when our Lord shall appear, we may be fet on his right hand, and as bleffed ones behold thy Face in fulness of joyes for evermore. Mean while, O Lord, be pleased to dispose of us and all our concerns, as may most agree with the great ends of thy Glory, and our own Eternal welfare. Enable and quicken us, whatever befalls us, to maintain content, eafy, and quiet minds, always in due temper for the Service of our God.

Interceffion.

And. O thou Father of all Mercies, who by thy Apostle, hast commanded us to make our prayers, and fupplications for all men, be intreated to extend thy Mercy unto all, according to the good pleasure of thine own will: But especially, visit, with thy more abundant loving kindness, all, who

who in every place call upon the name of Jesus, their Lord Chap. 9. and ours. Purify, Good Lord, unite, preserve, and enlarge thy Church daily. Continue thy mercies, particularly to these Churches, which thou hast united in one orderly Reformation,ingreat Britain and Ireland. Divert the judgments we have most justly deserved, pardon as well our great unfruitfulness, as all our other crying fins; and however thou art pleased to exercise us, be pleased to find other means to amend us, than civil breaches, and the calamities thence ensuing. Let thy Church fall into the hands of thee her God, but not into the hands of man. Watch over our Gracious King for good, and preserve him from violence and treachery, from difeases, and every evil accident,



till, in a good Old age, thou shalt remove him from a fading an incorruptible Crown with thy felf in Glory. Let thy Blesting also plentifully in all kinds rest upon his Queen, the Duke, and the whole Royal Family. And upon all other forts and conditions of men amongst us, more especially upon thy Ministers, who serve thee, and our Souls, in thy Church; and upon all who are employed in the Execution of Government, and Juffice in the State, pour out abundantly a Spirit of wildome and understanding, a Spirit of judgment and of thy Fear, that they may uprightly and effectually difcharge their Duty, to thy Glory, the interest of true Religion, and the publick peace and prosperity. Carry on, O Lord, throughout the Christian

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an World, the Reformation of thy Church; further fa- Part III. vour, and cherish it every where abroad, where it is begun. Graciously succour and support all, who suffer for a good Conscience any where upon the Face of the Earth, together with all others, who are in any distress inward or outward; as also all, who either desire or need, or have deferved our prayers. According to thine all-fufficient goodness, be thou all in all to every member of thy Sons Body.

Finally, we offer up unto Thankset thee, O God, our humble ving. praises and adorations, for all thy Mercies vouchsafed to us and to the whole Humane nature: For our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the World, bleffed for ever; for his most precious blood, shed on the Cross

for

Part III. Chap. 9.

for the remission of our fins, for his holy Spirit in any measure shed abroad in our hearts: For the freedom of thy House, for all the means of Grace, and advantages to an holy life, which we enjoy publickly, and privately; for the bleffed portions of the spiritual good things of this day. We bless thee also for thy more common Mercies, of food, raiment, sleep, health and fafety; for the publick peace, plenty, and prosperity.Oh! Let all thy loving kindness engage our hearts more firmly to thee. Send us this night to our rest, in thy peace and favour. Pardon the fins of our holy things. Accept the works of the day, and sprinkle all, both our Persons and Persormances, with the Blood of our Lord Jefus, in whose name and words we further pray, Our Father. &c.

Confessboth this, and the fore-Part III. going Chapter, may in strift-Chap. 8. ness seem a digression, from the bufiness first propounded: But the Reader will consider, that these things are immediately for the fervice of private, though not so strict? ly of fecret, Devotion; that therefore I have not far stept aside, and I now return more closely to proceed with Closet-work, which certainly every one will be so much the devouter in, by how much more regular, serious, and Conscientious they are in such Duties of the Family, as I have here touched: And fo likewise on the other part, the Devouter in the Closet the Deyouter in the Family, and indeed every where.

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PART IV.

Of most solemn Retirement into the Clofet for Humiliati. on.

CHAP. I.

An account of what it is to be treated of particularly in this Part.

TY most solemn retirement in-IVI to my Closet, and that for which the place is most principally designed, is upon such daies or times, which I fet apart to humble my

Part. IV.

Chap. 1.

my felf for my fins before God, by Fasting, and Prayer, by Mourning,

and all acts of Contrition.

And truly if the ordinary Fasting days of the Church were duly by all observed, all that our present defign would feem to call for, were, to deliver the manner of their private observation, that is, the particular duties to be on them performed. But for as much as most men keep them ordinarily no otherwise, than by a little change of diet, taking perhaps fish, oc. for flesh, and feeding, neither more sparingly, nor much less deliciously, than they do on other days, and so make them indeed no Fasting days, we must confider both of the Setting apart of days for private fasting, and of their Observation, when set apart. But first of all, it will be necessary to fpend a few thoughts upon the natime and ends of Fasting.

CHAP

Part IV. Chap. 2.

CHAP. II.

Of the Nature and Ends of Fasting.

Y Fasting here is meant a Religious abstaining from our lawful food. Lawful food at present we will account that, which, according to the common practice of sober and discreet persons of our rank and quality, is neither too much nor too dainty for us. For we may account a man intemperate in his feeding, as well by being too delicate and fine, and eating constantly of things which are fit chiefly for persons above his degree, as by eating overmuch. Now not all abstaining from this my lawful food is that Fasting, which is here intendfor I may abstain for my healths fake, or through business, or (by fome accidents)upon necessity, and all (it may very well be) without fin, and yet not fast, as Fasting fignifignifies a duty, or an act acceptable to God: but it must be a Religi-Part IV. gious abstaining, which I can duly Chap. 2. call Fasting, as at present that name is used. Now it will be best discerned to be Religious, (1.) by the ends See D. which I design to my self therein, H. mmond. and (2.) by my imployment of my self Catech. upon such my Fasting days.

Lib. 3.

First, As to the ends and designs sect. 3. of him who abstains or fasts Religionsly; the chief of them are.

mance of Religious exercises: when I fast, that I may have more leisure and be fresher for Reading, Meditation, and Prayer.

2. Mortification: when I fast to tame my flesh, to keep under and beat down my body, that it may be in due obedience to the commands of God and reason.

3. Liberality: when I fast to deal my bread unto the hungry, and either deprive my self, or feed more slenderly, that I may have the more wherewith to relieve others.

4. Sympathifing with the fufferings of others: when I fast out of M 3

CCO Part. IV. Chap. 2. വോ

a fellow feeling of the afflictions of God's people, commiserating their condition, and, through an abundance of charity, defiring as it were, to partake with them in their

fufferings.

5. Exercifing my felf to the obedience of Christs commands: when I fast out of felf-denial, (and though I both would and could cat) by fasting, as by one particular act of obedience to that general command of denying my felf exercifing my felf unto godline s.

6. Diverting or removing God's wrath, and expressing my forrow and humiliation for fin: when, God's wrath either resting upon my country, or friends, or felf, or hanging over any of our heads, I falt and deprecate it, and beg pardon of all those evils, which have brought us into fuch mifery or danger.

7. An holy revenge or punishment of my felf : when having repented of some sin, for which I am holily angry with my felf, I choole thus to punish and chastise my felf for my former (it may be) luxury, wantonness, or the like. When,

When, I fay, out of any of these_ intentions, or with these designs I Part. IV. abstain from my lawful meat, I then fast in the sense that Fasting is now taken: for this is (thus far) Religioully to abstain, and no doubt, but fuch abstaining is acceptable unto God, if all be as right as my intentions, that is, if fuitable performances or devotions be added, which is the fecond point, constituting a Religious Fast, and touching which, rules will anon be confidered, when the nature of Fasting is a little further looked into, and it shall be made evident that it is a duty, and no fuch needless matter, as men usaally feem to take it for, if we may judge of what they think, by what they do.

CHAP. III.

That Fasting is a Christian Duty.

on touching its necessity, or M 4- excuse

Chap. 3.

excuse for its neglect may be left, Part IV. it will be expedient to confider, what Evidence may be brought, that Fasting is a Christian duty. And

i. Indeed there needeth little more to be urged for the proving it a duty, besides the recollection and fumming up those excellent ends to which it ferveth and conduceth. No doubt but to humble my felf for my fins, to pray earnestly for pardon, and for the turning away of God's wrath are duties, no doubt but to keep under my body and make it subject, to relieve the poor, to sympathise with the afflictions of Joseph, are duties: now to all these is Fasting a means, and of some of them (besides) an expression. No doubt but to deny my felf, and to take up-on my felf an holy revenge for my former extravagancies, are duties: Now of these is Fasting a part. It may therefore hence sufficiently be concluded a duty.

z. A further evidence of the Mai.5. 2. same I take it to be, that Fasting is 6, 15. compared by our Saviour in that Sermon of his upon the Mount, which delivers

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to us the fum of the Christian Law, or rule of Evangelical duties, ran- Part IV. ked with Prayer and Almes-giving; (which are undoubted duties) and rescued from the Pharifaical abuses of it, the true manner of it being infinuated: Infomuch, that it may be justly demanded, how comes it to stand in the Christian Law? to what end needed its practice to be vindicated from corruption, and afferted, as it is by Christ, to its purity, if it were not a Christian duty? Belides.

ling for it; of old by his Prophet 30el, Sanctifie a Fast, call an Assembly: which place though it intend a publick Fast; yet when the case shall be fo with a private person, as the Prophet supposeth it with that people it will by Analogy, and in reason hold of a private one. (And it is evident our Saviour in St. Matthew spoke of those private Fasts, which every one is by him supposed to confecrate unto God). Then, who knows not that the Afflicting of the foul (touching which we meet with

Part. IV. quent mention in the old Testament)
Chap. 3. doth mainly intend Fasting? And as

to the new Testament, further yet:
though our Savionr once tells us,
the season for his Disciples fasting
was not then come, while the Bridegroom was with them, yet at the same

Mat. 9.15, time he tells us, its feafon would not be long to, and then they should

falt.

4. Again, the constant sense of the world, and of all the Saints of God in all ages (amongst whom, by how much soever any have been more zealous, by so much the more hath he been in the exercise of Fasting) is an argument (no whit contemptible) of its being a duty. Not only many the most serious Practists of natural Religion, and the Saints under the Law sasted, yea and the Pharisee too twice a week, but devout Christians every where, have ever been to us ensamples hereof.

s. (Which fets it offwith more advantage) we find not only the commendation of them for this practice,

practice, but the recompence of it with many fignal bleffings recor-Part. IV. ded in Scripture: which recompence Chap. 3. God doth not use to give to willworship. Thus we find Anna commended for her continuing in the Temple day and night, ferving God with Fastings and Prayers. Where it is observable, that Fasting is by the Luk. 2 36 3 Holy Ghost reckoned as one part of her ferving God. And that bleffed vision, which led Cornelius to the knowledg of Christ, was vouchsa- Alls 13. fed to him upon a day, he had fasted till about the ninth hour (which is with us three aclock) and then too, we find him not at meat, but prayer.

All which cannot but enforce, that though it be not always and indispensably a duty, as is Faith, Repentance, Charity, and such others; yet is it as far a duty, as any thing can be, that is not required absolutely and for it self; and that therefore when soever there is occasion for it, (and no Christian, as is evident from the Ends of Fasting, can be long without due occasions requi-

ring :

Part IV. Chap. 4. ring it) it is to be performed; and being so, if it should be performed in manner of a free-will offering, or oftner than in strictness the Christian might seem to have need of it; yet if it be done, as it should be, it is likely to be acceptable to God.

But this makes it seasonable to enquire, how often a Christian is to

Fast.

CHAP. IV.

How often a Christian is to Fast.

In answer whereunto it must be faid, that no certain or constant rule, as to all persons, can or may be given herein: nor will the times of Fasting be the same to all; some men having more need, others less (if not need, yet) opportunity. We are assured by the ends to which it serves, that many men's particular conditions (which haply leave them none other means to mortise the stellar, but this) make it a duty very necessary

necessary for them to be much in. On the other side, those who ever part, IV. feed sparingly and temperately, and Chap. 4. have an evener constitution, less inclined to carnality and inordinate affections, than have other menfeem to have less need of this taming discipline. And again, those whose labours are daily and hard, and whose life is servile, many times neither have so much need, nor so much opportunity of Fasting, as have those whose life is easier. Yet forasmuch as it is (according to what hath been above infinuated) a piece of Afflicting a man's foul, and so a necessary piece of contrition and repentance (which hath commonly somewhat of indignation against a man's self in it; there is none who can think himfelf wholly dispensed with for it, or to have no need at all of it. But I fay every man's conscience and Christian discretion must in the fear of God fet to himself the rule, how often he is to Fast: for that every one best knows his own needs, and it would be very finful in some, not to use more strict and oftnerFastings, than. others -

others; and some on the contrary must be very injurious to themfelves, should they use so much festing, as others (if they duly consider their leisure and condition) cannot but think themselves in duty bound to. This is the sum of what in general may be positively determined. Yet it is worthy our consideration, and may be a guide to particular persons to remember.

First, That it is a practice of very great antiquity to fast twice a week and was in use as is evident before our Saviour's days, and by him not cenfured in the Pharifee upon any other account, than because he was proud and conceited of it, using to reflect upon it in oftentation of his own holiness, and fcorn of others. And it is a very worthy note of St. Chryfostom's; that we should only avoid the Pharisee's pride, but not neglett his performances, as on the other side, for sake the Publican's fins, but retain his humility. is also a constitution, which although perhaps it pretend to more authority

must be acknowledged to be ancient Part. IV. Chap. 4.
and not unreasonable, that we should fast Wednesdays and Fridays, because on the one, the Lord a Clem.
was betrayed, and on the other, crncified: and it is beyond controverse, collected to have their solemn assemblies upon those days, not much less constant than upon the Lord's days.

Secondly, That if this course be not always to be used (which yet I know not what should hinder, except a man want leisure) yet at certain seasons, as in Lem and Ember weeks, the commands and custom of the Church will ingage me to as much as this amounts to, if not to more. And he to whom the commands of our Present, and continued practice of the Catholick Church, in devotionals significe nothing, is surely a man of a strange humorous sanctity.

Laftly, It is out of question, that there is no Christian can walk strictly, and keep a good conscience towards God and man, who hath not Part. IV. Chap. 4.

Dr. Hammond's Pract, Catech.

his solemn set days for the performing that great and weighty duty of humiliation, in calling himself to an account for all his ways, and confessing his sins more particularly before God: and those days should not be too flow in their returns [that is too feldom] lest his soul should be too deep in arrears [that is, lest there should be fuch along fcore of his fins unrepented of, that he think it an infinite and endless workto repent of them] and so be loth to come to an account at all. It is very reasonable therefore for every man and woman of any tolerable leisure to sot apart one day in a week for this purpose; or if the whole day, or any other part of it may not be spared from the business of his calling, yet the dinner time, that day, may be borrowed from eating, and thus more usefully imployed without disturbance to the affairs, or injury to the health, of any ordinary person 1 do not say that this day ought always to be one and the fame: it may be in one week one day, and the next another, according as my occasions will best bear: Nay even after 1.4

Bibate Debotion.

after I have appointed it, upon unexpected events it may undoubted- Chap. 5. ly be altered without guilt; but wholly neglected it cannot be without a finful omiffion, except upon fome urgent or more than ordinary business.



CHAP V.

Of the Preparatory acts for Private Fasting days.

HE worship of God is ever best celebrated, when some kind of preparation is made for it: It will be meet therefore, that somewhat I do by way of preparation for my

private Fasts.

And one piece of preparation, as well for these days, as for the Lord's day it felf (though indeed somewhat remote, or afar off) it will be, to be diligent other days in my calling, and well to husband both my time and estate. For if he, who hath not by his fix days labour made

Part. IV. Chap. 5.

made fuch provision for himself and his, as that he may be without care of providing upon the feventh day. will scarce rest that seventh day unto God without distraction (as feems to be fuggefted to us by those words [Six days shalt thou labour] being put into the fourth Command, ment) much less will he be able to allow himself constantly more time in a week than a feventh day comes to, to wit, fome part of every day, and a confiderable part belides of one of the fix days (which is to be his Fast) to the service of God. I would therefore have every men not to incomber himself in this world more than he needs must. We should learn to know when we have enough, and allow our felves fome part of our time to enjoy, as well as all to get. But this is preparation very far off.

The first Act of more immediate preparation for these my Fasting-days will be, prudently to contrive, upon foresight and consideration of my weeks business, what day or days they are, in which I can best

fpare:

spare time for this work; and these cos days, or that day will be the fittest Part. IV. to be pitched upon, in which I may Chap. 5the most freely converse with God without thedisturbance, which much business necessarily brings. Besides the time spent in my ordinary course of devotions, which are not upon my Fasts to be omitted, under pretence of making amends for them, or running them up into my Penitentary performances; I cannot upon those days, when I allow least, allow lefs than two hours, and upwards, to the peculiar work of my Fasts. So much time therefore at the least, I say, I must resolve such a day to devote.

Which being resolved upon, it will be fit (as a fecond act of my more immediate preparation) in the devotions of the evening before, to spend a petition or two in my prayers to God, that he would by his gracious Spirit prepare me for the work which I intend the next day, Softning my heart, and giving me to understand my errors, that I may duly lament them, and truly amend them; which Petitions.

Chap. 5.

Petitions (even in these words now used, if I please) I may easily see a fit place to insert in my prayers. And the day being come, unto my morning devotions it will be expedient to add fome fuch short prayer, as this which follows.

> Lord, who feest the pur-poses of all hearts, and hast been privy to the intentions of thy fervant touching calling himself this day to an account of his ways, and humbling himself before thee for all his transgressions; Be thou in mercy present to me by the preventions and affistance of thy grace, that I may with a true heart and contrite spirit perform what I intend. Grant, that no worldly cares or business may so take off my mind from thee, but that I may be able forthwith to return, and without distraction

Private Debotion.

to employ my whole foul in my defigned devotions to the glo- Part IV. ry of thy Name, my own C amendment and comfort here, everlasting blessedness hereafter, in and through thy Son Jesus Christ my Lord Amen.

261

And lastly, my morning devotions being thus finished, until the time come, that I have resolved to retire, I must endeavour to converse, and behave my felf in my ordinary affairs fo warily, as that nothing may discompose, disorder, ordisturb me; no worldly defign too much poffess my thoughts, according as above I have prayed.

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

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CHAP. VI.

The order of Humiliation or Penitentiary Devotions.

SECT. I.

The entrance unto the work.

Which I appointed to spend with God in my Closet; I must religiously observe mine appointment: For albeit the resolve was only private, and never proceeded without my own breast or Closet, yet hath God taken notice of it, and it stands on record in his omniscience: and by breaking these my private and (as haply I may judge) less material resolutions, I shall soon learn to break my word and vows too in other matters, both with God and man.

Coming therefore at my time appointed into myCloset, I reverently kneel kneel down before God, and having coo the fense of his presence and all-Part. IV. seeing eye upon my heart, humbly begin in some such short prayer, as is this which follows.

I Am come, O Lord, into thy presence upon work, which no one hath more need to do than my felf, to confider my ways, and repent of my fins, and turn to thee. But I have an hard heart. not apt to relent; and dry eyes, such, at least, which seldom shed tears for my sins. O that thou wouldst bow the Heavens and come down, and melt my foul in fuch godly forrow, which might work repentance not to be repented of. Open mine eyes, and help me to fee into mine heart : bring my fins to my remembrance. and let them in order before me, that an holy shame and confusion

Part IV. Chap. 6. confusion may cover my face for them, and thou beholding my contrition maist accept it, and both pardon me and assist me hereafter by thy grace, that I may live more godly, righteously, and soberly in this present world, and attain unto blessedness with thy self in the world to come, through the merits of Christ Jesus my Lord, and Saviour. Amen.

SECT. II.

Of Reading, so as to fit my self-examination.

Some fuch fupplication being, with all my heart, made unto God, Imay haply find it not to be alwayes the best course forthwith to fall upon the examination of my self: For, for this I shall be the fitter, when awakened and made more attentive

Chap. 6.

tentive to my felf by some other exercise. It may be proper there- Part IV. fore to fpend an hour in the reading fome honest Practical Book, which treateth feverally of those duties which we owe both to God, others, and our felves, to wit, upon that particular Book, which, knowing to be very good, I have chosen and fingled out to my felf to read and practife, fuch as are, the never enough commended Doctor Hammond's Practical Catechism, or (if that feem to any too difficult) that no less excellent, than plain and truly Learned, Book, The whole duty of Man, (for the Author of which our whole Church owes praises unto God, and, if he be yet alive, prayers.) And in my reading hereof, I must endeavour to read

First, with understanding: so that it is not fo much the repeating to my felf the words, as confidering and digesting the substance of them. which I must account reading of them. I must therefore read and fludy the Book, as Scholars do their Books; and if there be any mate-

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Part.IV.

rial thing which I donot understand, mark it, so that I may inform my self, by adviseing with some more

able person than my self.

Secondly, I must read all with application to my self, remembring that all this concerns me, and endeavouring to see how it concerns me, whether I perform the duty I read of, as I should, or how I neg-

lect it, oc.

By tihs means, taking upon every of my Fasting days apart, my Book will in convenient season be read over: which when it is, it must not be thrown aside, but read through again and again, with the same diligence till I am perfect in it. Nor ought the third or fourth reading of a good, profitable, and practical Treatife, to be tedious or unpleafant to me: for that Christian duties are not new, but have been, and always will be the fame, and multitude of Books do but confound plain heads. All wife men know, that to makea mans felf mafter of one good Book is better than to have flightly read an hundred, which were not either

either throughly understood or digested. To keep therefore thus to Part.IV. one good Book, which may instruct Chap. 6. me of the fum of my Christian duty, till I have fully made it mine own, is my most edifying course.

SECT. III.

Of Self-examination, and the view of our life.

His my exercise of reading bel ing over, it will be feafonable now to fall to the examination of my felf touching my fins. And here I shall find a very good help of the 1. Of fins. former work of reading, especially after some considerable use of it, when I am once come to know my feveral duties: for certain it is, No man can see what he hath done amis, what he hath left undone (which two heads of Omession and Commission contain under them all actual fins) till he feeth what he should have done. Now this duty of Self-exa-mination, a man may be supposed either N 2

Part. IV. Chap. 6. either to be a stranger in, and little to have practised; or else to have been much in it, and to be throughly verst in his own heart and life.

He who is a stranger to it, hath unquestionably more work to do, than the other. That he may therefore do his bufiness throughly, he must begin with those very first years which he can remember, and trace fin from his infancy, through his youth, to his riper and present years. He must see, what Devil first entred him, I mean what fins first seized him, how they have grown up and continued with him. Singularly useful in this case will be those Heads of Self-examination, in that admirable honest book, now commended, The whole Duty of Man, in the devotional part annext thereto, the use and application of which is also shewed at the end of those heads. But this will be too long a work for an hour or two. Such a perfon therefore had need to fet apart whole days for this purpose, till he hath a little recovered himfelf, and fet his accounts streighter with God.

Yet

Yet must he not, while he is enquiring after unknown or forgotten Chap. 6. fins, neglect to repent of his fresher and known transgressions. If therefore so it be, that for the present he cannot recollect himself, and make a diligent fearch into the whole course of his life, yet must he confess and bewail what he knows of himself, and together acknowledge, how much he is in arrears, which he hath forgotten, or at present doth not see, and for all humbly beg mercy. But this not fo, as wholly to put off further enquiry: but having this Fast examined himfelf touching fo many years or months, (according as his life finds his thoughts work) upon his next Fast to proceed farther, and fo on the next still farther, till he come home to his prefent age. Now in this fifting of my life, if I can, it will be very useful to me, and much further a distinct Repentance to use my Pen, and through each year fet down my fins: By this means I shall be able much better to consider them, and fo, both know more of my felf and of the deceitful ways, N 3: which

Part IV. Chap. 6. which sin hath to gain upon me.

And because, as I owe to God Confession and Repentance of my sins, so I owe also acknowledgment and thanks for his Mercies, therefore in this enquiry, it will be necessary to observe Gods remarkable Mercies and deliverances to me, recording these also year by year, as my sins.

2. Of Blaffings.

Thus will the fight of his Mercies aggravate my fins, and increase my repertance; and the fight of my fins parallel with his mercies, commend his goodness and enhance my thankfulness, both which are fingular benefits.

Rictions.

And because even afflictions have their use, and are to be accounted for, if therefore I find any considerable adversity or cross with which God hath exercised me, this also is to be registred as the former. If it did me good, I owe to God thanks for it: if not, I owe repentance for being incorrigible.

Being thus come to my present time, it will become me not to run in arrears again, but every Fast-day

still

still to make my accounts even; and to that purpose to take care, as a-Part IV. foresaid, that these my Fasts be not Chap. 6.3 too feldom.

Supposing therefore, that I am a person who have so far practised Self-examination, as that I have formerly taken account of all my life; That, which I shall have chiefly to enquire into upon each return of these my Fasting days, will be,

First, What new fins or Commissions I have been guilty of fince my

last day of accounting.

Secondly, What neglects: especially, if I have formerly made any. vow or new engagements to God, how I have observed or slighted them.

Thirdly In what posture or temper my heart hath continued, and at present is: whether fost, tender, penitent, considerative, and in awe of God; or whether dull, careless, insensible, or otherwayes out of order and prone to its old lusts.

Lastly, How the providence of God hath carried towards me sithence; what mercies received,

> N 4 what.

Part IV. Chap. 6. what afflictions fent upon me, and what hath been my carriage answerably. These heads of examination is I cannot remember, I must here turn to, and put the question to my self as to every point particularly. And whatever I find more remarkable, let it be registred in mine Accomptal (so I call that Paperbook, in which I use to keep account of my life and spiritual state) whereof as is above said, I shall find singular advantage in the following part of my Life.

SECT. IV.

Of the Endeavour of Godly sorrow, how to work our selves to it.

SIN is not such a thing, the knowledge of which is desirable for it self, but only in order to somewhat else, which it is apt to beget, towit, Godly forrow and repentance. My sins therefore being thus known, I am to set my self about sorrow-

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ing for them, and repenting of A

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Part IV. Chap. 6.

And to Godly forrow the readiest course will be, more fully to six my thoughts upon the sins, of which in my examination of my self I have found my self guilty, to look upon them so, as that mine eye may affect my heart, my attent consideration of them may move and grieve me, as it ought. To this purpose I am to consider particularly,

First, The soulness of my particular sins in themselves and in their own nature, how vile they make me how unable I should be to look men in the sace, if they knew all these unworthy acts by me, which I do of my self, and God sar better than my self: how vile therefore must they see the

secondly, The several Aggravaty of Man, tions which they admit; the chief Partit. 3. of which, and those which are aptest to affect me, I may take to be those which follow

how clear knowledge of Gods will I have finned. I knew fuch and fuch

N c actions

Part IV. Chap. 6. actions to be finful, when yet I ventured upon them.

Conscience I committed them. Did not my own heart at that very inflant smite me, telling me of the wrath of God and etrnal slames belonging to those, who do such

things.

3. Against how many engagements and obligations to the contrary have I finned? 1. My own vows and covenant both in my baptism and fince. 2. Gods mercies and forbearance, which should have invited and led me to repentance. 3. Gods judgments and heavie hand many times upon me, which should have taught me righteousness. I no hinderances in the way, which I broke through? It may be God's holy providence cast somewhat in, which did a while retard my commission of the sin, and if I had not been desperatly bent upon it, might have diverted me, and dasht the temptation. All these were engagements to the contrary, and have not I broke through many of them? 4. Was

4: Was not I the tempter and Devil to my felf in them? Did not I fet Part. IV. my felf on work without Satan's incitation of me thereto?

Nay, 5. Besides that I have committed them upon my own motion, did not I also commit them upon deliberation and advice? This must argue eithermuch unbelief, or a strange contempt of God and judgment.

6. Is this the first time of the commission of this or that sin, or is it not now by frequent iteration become customary, habitual, and almost a second nature to me? And I hereby more a child of wrath, than I was born?

of my fins been publickly dishonourable to God, and scandalous to my Christian profession? Hath not mine example, if not mine enticements, drawn in others to the same sin, or driven others out of conceit with Religion? Wretched man that Jam, that I should so hold [perhaps teach] the faith as to make Insidels.

Lastly, Something of grievousness:
the circumstances of time and

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

place, &c. may add thereto, which ought not to be overlooked.

> If the confideration of this the foulness and grievousness of my fins move not, or too lightly touch mine heart, let me in the third and last place seriously consider, what I have incurr'd and merited by my fins. Certain it is, God is for them displeafed with me : I am out of his favour, and when I look up to him, I can expect nothing but his wrath and curfe, wrath and all its bitter effects upon my body, in fickness, pains, and loathfom maladies; upon my foul, in horror of mind, inquietude, and torments of conscience; upon mine estate, in disappointments, losses, and ruins; upon my Relations, in making them griefs and burdens to me; upon my Name, in infamy & reproaches; nay, upon my very Prayers, in having them become an abomination before God. In a word, Gods wrath and curse in all I have & all I do, is the only portion my fins have made mine in this present world, and in that future and eternal world judgment without mercy, horrour and

and the gnawing worm, and torment, everlafting, fo pure, fo exqui- Part IV. fite, as not to admit of fo much re- Chap.6. freshment as what a drop of water would give to a fcorched tongue. This is the wages due to my fins, & which, except God in great mercy divert it, will infallibly befal me: & divert it he will not, except upon my fincere and hearty repentance, the thing which I have in prefent confideration, and with all my foul must endeavour, as I tender everlafting blifs, and the efcaping everlasting torments.

Through fuch heads as thefe. should I trace my fins, especially those of them, which are most gross: and in my Meditations dwell fouron those considerations, as may, if possible, move my forrow, at least breed an utter aversion of the sin &c a loathing of my felf for it : And if it be forthat I cannot fled tears, and really mourn over my fins, yet if I can find in my felf, athrough difpleafore with my felf for my fin, and an hatred of it, together with an earnest defire to be freed from the habit and Part IV. the guilt of it, this I may conclude Chap. 6. to be a forrow of mind, and ought therefore to cherish in my foul.

SECT. V.

Of Repentance, which is the effect of godly sorrow, its true nature and way of practise.

2 Cor 7.

The Apostle saith, Godly sorrow worketh repentance, which need not to be repented of. Now that repentance may seem to consist of two things. Of a full purpose of heart to forsake sin, which is a change of mind; and of bearty endeavours against it, which is a change of life.

Meravore.

Merepé-

first, I say, I may not think! have repented of my sin, till I have taken up a full purpose and resolution of mind against it for the suture. As long as there is in me any intention of returning to it again, I am an impenitent wretch. Now such purpose and resolution the foregoing.

ing confideration of my fin is apt to beget: and therefore by laying fuch Part IV. thoughts truly home unto mine heart, by imploying my mind much on them, I ought to endeavour to work my felf up to fuch resolution and never to fit down contented or think my felf penitent, till I am fo wrought upon. I shall not much need to be minded, that during fuch endeavours, I ought to intermix with my meditations frequent petitions to Almighty God, whose Grace only it is, which is sufficient for me for the turning of my heart. from fin.

Now purposes and resolutions are: rotten, except endeavours to fulfil them follow. This therefore is the second part of repentance, that as I have resolved, so I endeavour against fin.

And this endeavour against fin feems to have two parts, the one of which may best be acted in my Clofet, the other must be acted any where and every where.

The first part of the endeavour against sinis, to do what we can to mortifie

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

mortifie the habit, that is, the inclination, readiness, and customary proneness, which we have to the fin, which is to be forfaken. And that

must be done.

1. By considering with my self what means, or remedies, I can find out against that sin. Certain it is, the more I can restain or keep back my self from the actual commission or doing of any sin, the more will the power of that sin decay in me, the less inclined shall I be thereto. Wherefore if I cannot at the first root out the habit, or overcome that miserable inclinedness, which I find thereto, yet let me endeavour to find out such means, which may keep me from the acting the fin, and, I say, that customary proneness unto the sin will by the grace of God decay.

Now in general, it will be a true and proper Remedy against any fin, to confider the occasions or inducements, which chiefly lead me thereunro, and to provide as well aslcan,

against them.

Whether or no is it a sin which is deeply

deeply rooted in my nature and conflictution? or whether or no is it Part IV. fuch an one, which by my way of Chap. 6. living, converse, and custom, I have fettled in my felf? if it be of the latter fort, the breaking my felf of that custom, the altering, so far as is possible, such converse as hath brought me into it, is a very good remedy against it. But if it be a fin innate, and after a fort planted in my very make and complexion, it is more difficult to subdue: But the way will be, (1.) To take such course with my self, as before said, that for the future I may keep my felf from the acting of it, as much as may be; that is, first to abstain from. and provide against all such occasions which have or may blow up the flame of my inbred lufts. And then (2.) If fasting, watching, or any such usage of my body will abate the strength of that particular lust, to practife it diligently: And further (3.) To make it a constant petition in my daily prayers to God, that he, by that Spirit, by which he is able

to subdue all things unto himself,

would

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

would mortifie in me the affection and lust, which I have after that sin. And by presevering in such course, no doubt but at length, through the divine Grace, I shall overcome it. These means therefore having confulted of (attending to my particular sin,) the next step which I am to take in the mortifying of it, is,

2. To resolve there before God, diligently to use those means, which I have particularly consulted of, and so forthwith to order and contrive all my affairs (as far as in me lies) that I may without any partiality use them all according to the best of my skill, and in the most effectual manner that I know.

The fecond part of the endeavour against sin (which will not be so much the work of my Closet, as of my life) is diligence in the using of these means (which I have thus considered of, sound out, and resolved upon) wherever I am, and whenso ever I have opportunity.

And particularly, as neer as we can, to keep a constant watch over our minds, our eyes, our words,

our.

our actions. If we find a temptation infinuating it felf, immediate- Part IV. ly to repress it in the begining; lif- Chap6 .. ting up our hearts to God, imploring his Grace, minding our own resolutions, and pursuing a fixed method. The Devil will certainly fly, if thus refisted. And this we must be fure to do in such sins, which have been most familiar to us, or else we shall never overcome them, nor will our repentance be effe-Aual.

Now that I may do all this the better, it will very much help, if I write down some abstract or principal Heads of my penitential Devotions before God in my privacy, which I am to do in mine Accomptal; I mean, if I record every days Fafling, and the issue thereof, what I found new in mine estate, what I resolved on, what means I confidered of against such and such sins, &c. We find that they not only made a Covenant, but put it in writing, and sealed it before the Lord in their solelemn Fast. Nehem. 9. 38. This will be one way to fecure me against being

Part IV. Chap. 6. being slighty in my penitentials? and it may besides much both confirm and quicken me in my execution of these my resolves, to read them over written by my own hand before God in private.

And being thus registred, it will be good for me to be often (when I come into my Closet about my devotions, and examine my self) looking on and reading them over, lest forget fulness should betray me into the breach of them.

SECT. VI.

An exemplification of the former Rules in two sins.

necessary practice may be as plain as possible, it may haply conduce to set down some particular examples, in which those general rules may appear practised. And forasmuch, as it was before said, that all sins, of which we shall find our selves frequently guilty, are either such

fuch which are rooted in our partienter complexion, and fo may efpeci- Part. IV. ally be called, our iniquities) or fuch Chap. 6. which by force ontward occasion (as converse or manner of living) we fall into, one instance shall be of such a fin, which is commonly too too much rooted in mens natures or particular Crases, to wit, Uncleannes; the other in fuch an one, which, though haply a man may be naturally inclined to yet commonly may be more truly referred to the head of contracted than of in-born evils, and that is, Trifling away our time.

First then suppose that upon examination of my felf, one fin, whereof I find my felf guilty, be Uncleanness, and this I find diverfly to have run through agreat part of my life. Touching this; certain it is, that I repent not of it as I should, if I fet not my felf to root it out. Wherefore, according to the rules laid down, I thus proceed.

Being come now fo far in my de See Sect.4 votions upon my Fast-day as to Meditation, and having in my Meditations chiefly employed my thoughts upon

Part IV. Chap. 9.

upon my felf, whereby I have found my felf guilty of this fin, I fet upon the repenting of it. To that purpose I endeavour to forrow for it. I therefore consider, first, how grievous a sin that is in it self. And in this case it may be, that good practical book which I have chosen to my felf to read and fludy, may much help me, and discover to me the grievousness of it in its own nature. This being done, I consider how grievous my commission of it is: what particular aggravations all my actions of this kind admit. Here! open this my book, and examine it by those aggravating particulars mentioned: Further, I consider the evil it hath brought, and may bring upon me; wrath here, and wrath to come. All which cordially employing my thoughts upon, I endeavour to affect my foul therewith, and to work in my felf a reall forrow and loathing of fuch courses: This forrow will work repentance, to wit, Firsta resolution against what I loath, and then an endeavour against it, as well by consulting remedies and means againsti 25

Sect. 4.

as by putting my felf into a way of using such means, of which particu- Part IV. lar rules have been just now given. Chap. 6. And the result of my Humiliation thus far, I, as briefly as I can, register in mine Accomptal, in some such fort as this.



An. Dom.— Januar.— Fasted: I found my self guilty of Uncleanness. This I considered to be in it self a very grievous fin.

1. It defiles my very body, makes

me loath som.

2. It debaseth and dulls my soul.

3. It is that which nature it self is

ashamed of.

4. God most perfectly hates it; and therefore when he expresseth the vilest sins, calls them Whoredom. Eze. 16.15.

5. It is one of those sins, which God seldom suffers to escape unpunished

here.

6. I shall never be able to like my self, or have any inward content in my self while I practise is.

7. Perseverance in it will undoubtedly destroy my very body and health,

as well as soul.

Part IV, Chap. 6. Each of these, and more than these, as God shall be pleased to assist me in my Meditations, I am supposed to have attently considered.]

My particular commissions in this case have the following aggravations.

They have been done,

1. Knowingly. 2. [as I find it with see Sect. 4 my felf] possibly against checks of conscience. 3. Against my vow of baptisme expressly, &c. 4. Spontaneously. 5. Deliberately in such and such cases. 6. Frequently, and thus long, &c.

Whereupon, most humbly begging pardon of God, I resolved with all my might to endeavour against it. To that purpose I considered of those

means against it.

1. Spare diet : frequent Fasting :

avoiding high meats.

2. Spare sleeping: not lying down till sleep compel me, rising early, or at least as soon as sleep leaves me.

2. Hard usage of my body: lying hard, using prostrations, or tiring po-

stures in my prayers, &c.

4. Praying often, and much conversing with God in holy duties, which will make me ashamed of such carnal delights delights and fordid enjoyments.

9. Avoiding light company, light Part IV. discourse, gasture, looks, gazing, erc.

6. Considering death, and that in its pomp and terribleness, looking much on Sceletons, dead mens scully, bones, or contemplating consumptive and ghastly visages.

7. Not venturing my folf on any

opportunities on temperations to it.

8. Checking all temptations and motions of this kind at the very first perceiving tham; flying to God, diverting my thoughts by Prayer, Ga.

Thefo, I then nefelved to practife, and will oberefore frequently read o-Amen Lord, thy grace !

But it may be, this is not my fin : however, it will teach me how to deal in humbling my felf for that which is. Suppose then I find my felf guilty of trifling away my time: There is no repenting hereof without amendment: But what course may I take to be truly penitent for E ?

The Answer is: I must proceed as before. Meditating, Resolving, Consulting,

Chap. 6.

Part. IV. con

Consulting, and by all means, Confirming my felf against it. Chap. 6. having so proceeded, possibly the refult of what I am to register in my Accomptal, may be to this effect, or in this form.

[Such a day fasted] I found my self guilty of trifling away my time. I con-

sidered the grievousness thereof.

1. This is truly Idleness, what name foever else I give it. For, Idleness is not the doing nothing, but the not doing what I should, when I should, Now idleness is undoubtedly a grievous sin, as having not only its own guilt in it, but the guilt of many more sins, which it occasioneth.

2. This is a frustrating the end of my being, as far as in me lies, anda living to no purpose: Now that how unworthy is it of a reasonable crea-

ture !

3. I must needs be unprepared for Heaven, and my great Accounts, while guilty hereof. Every hour stands on record in God's omniscience: and I cannot, it may be, give account of three hours in a day.

. 4. How evidently do I ruine my felf.

felf, not only as to the future, but as to this present world hereby? What Part. IV. might I do, and be, were I careful of Chap. 6. my time?

Further, for me to do this, how grie-

vous is it ?

1. I know it to be sinful. 2. When I have remembred my duties to be undone, I have yet neglected them, against the present warnings of my conscience. 3. How many ways have I been engaged against this? So much, So worthy a Work to do, and So much of my time already spent, &c. [Easie it is hereby to see how I may proceed according to my particular state.]

These Meditations being finished, and, as briefly as I can, entred, it remains that I enter my resolution of endeavour against this sin as before: and then study meet remedies thereto. Now this fin not being always natural to them in whom it is found. but adventitious, it concerns me to consider, as before admonished, how I came to be guilty hereof, and to fuit my remedies to those occasions.

1. It may be I am bussed

Part IV. Chap. 6. many things, and so either neglect all, or (what chiefly concerns me) my proper duties. Perhaps I cannot endure that which should be my busness, but am fickle, desultorie, and rambling in mine imployment, and though I am not much guilty of doing nothing, yet do I not do what I should: and this is undoubtedly a piece of Idteness, as above faid, for a man to neglect the buffness of his season and of his calling; and to be most taken up in things which least concern him. Now here the remedy will be to consider, what it is that is my proper business to put my work into a certain mould and order: and then to fet my felf a task daily, and engage my felf (as well as I can) to fo much of it, before I divert to any Eccentrical occupation, I mean, to the bulying myfelf in things, which do not properly concern me.

away my time with friends and company: much goes in idle vifits; I have a nature, which is too fociable, and when I meet with company to

my

my mind, I know not how to deny my felf of their fociety and dif-Part 1V. course: and if I do not meet with Chap. 6. fuch, I am apt to leave my bulmess and go feek fuch. Here the Remedy will be (partly the same with the former) Prudently to proportion my time to my business. So much of my business have I resolved to do; that resolution must not be broken: fo much time will that work take me up; so much, my devotions: wherefore I have but fo much left for fociety; more therefore I must not take. If therefore I am lite into any acceptable company, it will become me often to confider, how goes the time? fo much of my imposed task yet lies andene, oc.

3. It may be much of my time is spent in dulness, sitting still, Oc. It may be my constitution is such, that if I eat heartily, I am a great while unfit for my work, and so feeding freely lays upon me a kind of necesfity of being idle. Here the remedy Will be to resolve upon sparet diet, to bridle mine appetite, and eat less

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Part IV. Chap. 6. ന്താ

when I do eat; or if I cannot that, to eat feldomer, and to be at least but once a day unfit for my work : which time of unfitness, if I will well husband my time, I may best allow for fociety; it will be fit enough for that.

4. It may be vexations, anger, or giving way to passion, many times indisposeth me for business. Here the remedy will be to watch against fuch disturbances, to endeavour meekness, patience, and the morti-

fication of unruly affections.

5. It may be follicitude about this world, thoughtfulness, cares, take up many of mine hours: and then, mine head being full, I cannot call home my mind, and fall to work: and when by my care I cannot find any expedient for what I fought, this breeds discontent, envy of other mens ease, happiness, freedom, &c. And feriously it is a great deal of time, which narrow fortunes thus steal away from some men. Here the remedy will be, study of content, frugality, wife husbanding mine estate, proportioning mine expences

Chap. 6.

to my revenues. And fo whatever I find to be the occasion of my loss Part. IV. or expence of time, let me study a fuitable remedy thereto, and register as well the occasion as its corresponding remedy. Let me then proceed to resolve upon the use of such remedies, and to order my particular affairs in fuch fort, that I may use them with the best advantage: and fuch resolutions let me always enter upou my Accomptal, for the fastning them both upon mine heart and memory.

SECT. VII.

A further consideration of Repentance, with reference to some particular fins.

P Epentance may feem to have been confidered hitherto with a Relation to babitual sins, that is, fuch fins which either by nature or custom are rooted in the heart, and have begot in the Soul a readiness. and inclinedness unto them. But furely, if I throughly understand the practice Part IV. Chap. 6.

practice of it, as it hath been hither. to described, I cannot be at a loss in what fort it ought to be exercifed, when I find my felf guilty of one particular fall, or fin, the habit, or customary readiness to which, I have not yet contracted: for the fubftance of my work is still the same, viz.

Having in mine examination of my felf found my felf guilty, I am by attent consideration of that fin, whereof I am guilty, both in it felf, and as it is mine, to endeavour to affect my heart therewith, fo that I may truly forrow for it : and though, it may be, I may truly conclude, that it hath not yet got fully a rooting within me, yet for as much as the first or second commission thereof hath in probability made me more ir clined and easiethereto, than I was, when my mind, having been never much bent this way, was thitherwards more inflexible, therefore ought I to fludy and confult how for the future to secure and confirm my foul against any relapses or second backflidings: and after fuch confultation

consultation to resolve and engage my felf with all possible strength Part IV.

against it.

One thing more, in case of fins committed or wrong done unto my neighbour, is yet requifite to the making my repentance fincere and through; and that is that I forthwith upon fight of the fin, if possible, make restitution: otherwise, that I make it as foon as I am able; and in case I am not likely to be able to make it, that I endeavour, by acknowledgment of mine offence, to feek for reconciliation unto him. whom I have so wronged. The necessity hereof may be concluded, 1. From what hath been above faid, that repentance cannot be true, extept there be an amendment. Now most evident it is, that while I suffer the wrong done, yet to remain or continue, I am still injurious; and fo consequently there is no a mendment, and therefore no repentance. And, 2. the words of our Saviour most expressy enforce it. If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remember that thy Brother bath onghe arainst

Chap 6.

Chap. 6. യ

Part. IV. first go and be reconciled to thy Brother, then come and offer thy gift. God will accept of no facrifice or duty whatfoever, at my hands in fuch a case, till I have reconciled my felf, if possible. If any think this not to amount to restitution, 3. Let him read Levit. 6.2,3,4,5,6. and Numb. 5. 6,7,8. where he shall find, besides the fin-offering to be brought to God, in case of wrong done to others, it was injoined, that the principal should be reftored, with an addition of one fifth part thereto. Now if so it be, that I cannot find those, nor the relations (as Children, Widows, Heirs) of those to whom I have been injurious, that I may make restitution, let me give and devote so much to the poor, as would do it, this is to restore unto God when I cannot to my brother: let me never lay up any thing wrongfully gotten, or that wherewith recompence should be made for wrong done, it will eat as doth a Canker. Besides, I cannot, if by wrong I increase my store, ever with a quiet conconscience, reslect thereon, or reasonably expect either the Pardon of Part. IV. that my sin, or Comfort in what I Chap. 6. possess.

Now the consideration how this Refitution or reconcilement may be made, and the resolution to make it, may be best done in my Closet; and such consultationand resolution deserves a place to be registred among my other penitential Devotions, upon the same reasons as they do.

These rules in my repentance is I have observed, though I cannot look upon any action of mine, as compleat, yet I may have hope I have not herein been slighty, but

that God through Christ Jesus will.

accept it.

SECT. VIII.

Of that Faith which is requisite in order to pardon of sin.

Besides Repentance, it is commonly said that God requireth Faith of us in order to the pardon of our sins, and it is most certain, if Pait IV. Chap. 6. S

See D. Himmond. Pract. Catech: Lib. I. 8-9. 3.

we understand Faith as we ought; But it is as certain, that people are ordinarily very much mistaken in the nature of Faith; as it is not unusual for us to be in such things, the names whereof are taken in fuch different fenses as the name of Faith is in Scripture.

Now Faith, we all of us know, fignifies Belief: and therein doth the nature of it lye. Him that we believe in, is God: That which we believe, is his Word. So then, Faith is a full belief or credence of the whole Word of God, and especially of the Gospel; a receiving it, and every part of it, in a way fuitable to the matter of it; agreeing to whatever is therein affirmed, as being true; believing all the promises, that God will never fail on his part, unless we do on ours; fetting our felves to fulfil all the commands, as believing all that is commanded to be our duty and of indispensable necellity to falvation; being affected with an holy care and fear, upon consideration of all the threatnings, as being perfuaded God will

will be as good as his word, and punish all impenitent samers. Faith, Part. 1V. I say, is the hearty and sincere embedded by bracing and being persuaded by the whole Word, and these its parts and the being affected accordingly: and we must not single out the promises and believe them alone, for all commands and threats are no less the Word of God, than are the promises, and therefore must be as much believed; not shall any one ever be justified who doth not thus believe the whole.

To be as express and distinct as I can: A true justifying Faith is no simple act of any one Faculty, but the whole Rational Soul is engaged therein.

First, It presupposes in the understanding Knowledge both of the Doctrine of the Gospel, and of such Evidences which persuade that Doctrine to be true.

Secondly, It contains, (1.) An Affent of the Judgment to the Gofpel as True; and that the Covenant of Grace, therein held forth, is the only Method, or Treaty

Part. IV. Chap 6.

between God and Man, by which pardon of Sin, and Eternal Life is to be had. (2.) A Consent of the Heart and Will closing with this Method, honestly engaging in, and endeavouring, the performance of the Conditions on our part required: namely of Evangelical Obedience and Perseverance. (3.) A Trust in God that he will, accorcording to his gracious Covenant, for Christs fake pardon all our fins, accept us as Righteous, and keep, guide, and govern us to everlasting Salvation. This account I think takes in all that can be required in a justifying Faith; and which foever of these branches may be spared in any extraordinary case, I am fure neither Knowledge, Affent, or Consent must be omitted. Trust haply may feem implied, and in effect contained in the Confent.

Now if it be asked, whether it be not faith in the free promifes of the Gospel, or a trusting to God through Christ, that he will pardon my sin, which doth chiefly justify me? I say, No: and that the

affenting

affenting to, and embracing the Doctrine of the Gospel, the re-Part.IV. ceiving every command and threat fo deeply into my heart, as that the belief of the one turns forthwith into obedience, and of the other into an holy fear, (which belief makes up the other parts of faith) cannot beconceived to be in its own nature inferior unto that truft, or less either valued or required by God. I do not fay that God accepts of any of them, or all of thefe, for their worth, but of his meer Grace, and according to the Covenant of Grace; (He accepts of them, and of the Person, in whom they are, purely through Christ, through his merits doth he impute this faith to fuch persons for Righteousness; that is, reckon and accept of this his cordial and impartial receiving his whole Gospel after this fort, as well as if he had performed perfect and unfinning obedience, as he was first bound :) but this I fay, (and that upon the evidence already hinted)that justification or the pardoning of fin, is no more appropriated

Part. IV. Chap.6.

ated to that one act of faith, which we call Traft, than to those other and that I cannot (if comparison in this be made) but account those other acts (that impartial ful mitting and devoting the foul to obedience an-Iwerable to every command, that true resting in the fear of God) as the more principal, worthy, and, I am fare, less tobe suspected acts of faith: For, that of Trust, presumption may look to like, as to deceive us in; but those other, if durable, admit no counterfeit. Upon the whole I cannot conceive, what we call a justifying faith to proceed any otherwise than as follows.

First, I do believe the promise of pardon of sin to be true, and God to be faithful, and that without all doubt God will not fail on his part, except I fail on mine. God will not fail to give the promised pardon, if I fail not to person the condition, upon which he hath promised it.

Secondly, I therefore forthwith fet my felf about the condition, or duty required, as I expect a pardon, or promifed mercy from God:

Perbate Devotion.

I forrow for my fins; I endeavour part amendment of life; I cleave unto chap. God with full purpole of imparti- al Obedience.



Thirdly, Having done fo, I do not believe that all this is worth any thing in it felf, but that it is through the meer grace of God in Christ Jefus, that I must be accepted, pardoned, and faved. Wherefore ! calt my felf on Gods Mercy and Grace, I trust to God, according to his promise (the condition of which I have endeavoured to fulfil) that he will through Christ pardon all my fins, and reckon this my faith to me for righteonlines, according to his gracious Covenant, to that purpole. To trust for the pardoning of my fins upon any other terms is unbelief and prefumption: for it is a believing God will pardon my fins upon other terms, than he faid he would ever pardon fin, and that is a believing God will be false.

But now let the case be put, that some grievous finner, much humbled under the sense of his notori-

സ്ത Part. IV. Chap. 6. ന്താ

ous wickedness, doth, as beforefaid, believe the promise to be true as it is, fet himself about the fulfilling its condition (forrowing, repenting, &c.) believe all that he doth to be in it felf worth nothing, but yet Christ's merits to be of infinite worth, through which notwithstanding he dare not trust for the pardon of his fins, as remembring them so to have abusedChrist. and doubting left he hath finned be youd the condition, which the promise of pardon of sin thro' Christ's merits requires, and in this temper dies, before he can exert any diffinct act of Truft, or confidence, as to his own case in particular. Put, I fay, this cafe, shall we think this man bath not a true and justifying faith? He hath furely, and it may be a truer faith, than hath many an one who hath aftrong and bold trust. But yet it is evident he hath not this trust: For he durst not, thro' fense of his own unworthiness, and fear he had finned beyond the condition of pardon, animate himself thereto. See-

ing

ing therefore that it is thus polli-

ble a man may in fuch case be justi- Part. IV.

fied without that formed act of Chap. 6. faith, I conclude that justification is not appropriate unto it, that is, that a distinct trusting in God, that he through Christ will pardon my personal fin, is not that act of faith.

which chiefly justifies me: and that they are very much mistaken, who take this (by it felf) to be the true nature of justifying faith, that they believe God will pardon their

fin for Christs sake. It is certainly very comfortable and happy to be able clearly to conceive fuch Trust; and possibly, most good

Christians do: yea, I confess such person as I put the case of, may be understood implicitly and virtu-

ally to have such latent Trust. because he sets himself to perform the Conditions of mercy. But

forasmuch as it is supposed not distinctly formed, nor can the poor dejected penitent feel he has it, to

exclude him from justification for want of fuch a formed act, when he hath evidently all the other parts

of

Part. IV. Chap. 8.

of faith explicitly, is more I think than any regions considerative man will avow. So then I how lee the course which I am to take in my his unlimited, to fee out the pardon of my an I am to believe, that God will not fail on his part, if I do not fail on mine: I am therefore to vepent of my fins, as before I have been taught, and perfift in untendment of life, all the while trusting in the grave of God through Christ, according to the promise of the Gespel or Covenant of Grace, that, I doing thus, my fins shall not be haid to my charge, as being raken away by the crossof Christ.

SECT

SECT. IX.

Of Prayer upon Such Fresting dou.

Part IV.

Hat which will much heighten my affection in this my Repentance, and further complete all iss parts, yet remains, to wit, Brayer; which as it must on this occasion and day be more large and parricuthan ordinary, fo t cannot now want matter fon it, after fuch confideration of my condition, and of the way how I am to feel for pandon of fin, as is supposed fail the formen nules chave been observedi) to have foregone Particularly, I am to frame my prayers, or at leaft to alter them, as near as I can, to my condition.

that not without those aggravating orcumstances, in which I formerly considered them.

2. Representing before God my fornom, my resolution of heart a-against them.

3. Begging his grace, to affift me

Part. IV. Chap. 6. in the fulfilling my godly purposes, and to pardon all my sins, whether known and confessed, or as yet unknown to me.

To these heads my Christian discretion may add more according to my particular condition. To wit, if any judgment rest on me or mine, or is feared by reason of these my sins, I may implore deliverance from it: If any mercy is expected, or by me aimed at, which I fear my sins may most justly hinder or blast, I may importune God for the granting it; or otherwise apply my self as occasion serves.

Now as to the form or outward manner of my prayer, if I am able to pray otherwise, I shall not haply on these occasions see it always sit or convenient to use set or composed forms: for that, there may be many particular affecting circumstances of my sins, which no form will express so plainly, as I have need to express them for the moving my forrow. If therefore I find my heart ready and so composed, that I dare venture upon what we call a conceived

conceived prayer, (which being of coo mine own frameing, may by the Part. IV. affiftance of the Spirit, more per-Chap. 6. fectly fuit with my condition in all, than one composed by another to my hand) having either noted in a Paper before me the substance or matter of my Confessions, Petitions, and Thanksgiving, (which Paper for memories fake, I lay before me when I kneel down to Prayer) or else so considered of, as that it will be ready, I may spend a few thoughts touching the particular expressions, by which I intend to represent this my mind to God, and then proceed. To this purpose these these two practices may be helpful.

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of God, which (being I daily read fome of it) I may know to be suitable to my present case. If I find mine heart hard, let me read some affecting working place. (Such I may be presumed to have noted, as I have read in my course.) If I find it tender, let me read such place or places, as may nourish this tenderness, or raise

Chap. 6.

raise me to an higher pitch of zeal Pare IV. and ardency in these duties, which I perform to him And in like manner cally fult with my coediar called in

or zur To recal and confider fuch for expressions of the particular matters which I am to fet forth before God. as I may be prefumed to have observed and treafured up in my Memory or Book, in my ordinary course of

down to Praygnibear

After fich premeditation, with an hely fear, I am to endeavour to pour out my inward conceptions before Godi, las firly and as fervently as I can. But I must not think that ferency hies in louds fleaking ; but in the inward affection of the foul notwithstanding, if my Closet be so firmate, that I may judg I cannot be heard without, I may many cines find, that it will conduce, if not to the affecting memore, yet to the keeping my mind more close to my buliness, for me to speak in a voice exceeding a private whitper spland

But let me be never fo able a person, and my beart never fo fixt, to the a form to far, as where occasion

Chall

shall ferve to leave it a while, (to wit where I would confess or ask Part IV. more particularly) may keep my Chap. 6. prayers from being loofe, imperfect, broken and disorderly, and confequently make my devotions riper. Now fuch an one is this which follows.

Thou Great, Holy, and Invocati-Fearful God, unto whom on. all things are naked and open; and before whom, as being of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, nothing that is unrighteous shall stand. I even General blush and dread to appear be-confession fore thee: for in me there is of griehothing but iniquity that thou canst behold. Iniquity indeed is too clean a word: I am nothing but filth. I have finned against Heaven and before thee, and am fo far unworthy of being called thy fon, that I am not fit to be called thy fervant: but THE

Part.IV. Chap. 6.

but deserve rather as a Rebel, as a faithless and treacherous wretch against thy Majesty, to be destroyed of the Destroyer, to have all thy wrath and plagues to meet in me, and to be made unto the world an example of thy feverity and revenging justice, that by me men might learn, no more to presume and backslide.

Allegation of promelt heart more

kindly.

But there is mercy with thee, O Lord, that thou mayst be mises, to feared and sought unto; Nor affect or hast thou, as thou hast protestthe ed, any pleasure in the death of finners; but art fo defirous, that they might return and be healed, that thou hast not spared thy very only begotten Son, but hast given him to feek, and, by death it felf, to fave the loft Sons of men; promising, that of all those, who through him come home unto thee, thou wilt

wilt by no means cast off any. I come, O Lord, at least I have Chap. 6. here set my self in the way to come; and I do with my foul bewail my departures: Now let not my Lord be angry, and I will confess.

I have, O God, a most cor- Particular rupt nature and heart, full of confession impurities and abominable al fins. things, as a Cage of unclean Birds. She was innocent in comparison of me, out of whom came but feven Devils. I may most truly style my self Le-

gion: fuch swarms of lusts do possess me! The lusts of the flesh (Intemperance, Idleness, Uncleanness, &c,) the lusts of the eyes (+ Covetousness, Envy, &c.) the Pride of life (+ Conceitedness of my self, Ambition and proud P 2

Wherefoever this Prayer mark + is found, the Reader must not forget to consider particularly touching those expressions, whether they fit his condition.

Wrath



Wrath&c. are things familiar to me, rooted and grounded in my heart: And that truly, Lord, not fo much by nature, as by continued custom and wicked practice. I have my felf made my foul more depraved, than ever it was by corrupt nature. That I am dull and heartless in the performance of all holy duties; that I am vigorous and active in the ferving my lusts and pleafures, and the fulfilling the defires of my flesh and mind; that I am vain, heedless, and commonly void of thy fear in all my ways. I owe very much unto my own vicious Converfation; unto my giving my felf up to walk in my own ways; unto my choosing vanity, and addicting my felf there to; one while, unto my total neglect, at other times, flighty discharge of thy worship. Intpof.

possible in a manner it is, that Part IV. any one who lives as I have Chap. 6. done should have a better heart than I have.

And at this rate, O Lord, of actual have I ever lived. My child fin. In hood, the more innocent part childof my life, was a state of neces- hood. fary ignorance of thee: yet even herein, how foon did the accurfed fruits of inborn lufts begin to flew themselves! My youth. youth, what was it, but a vain and brutish, a mad and sensual age! As to that small notice. which therein I had of thy will and nature, how little credit did Igive unto it, and how ineffectual was it upon me, either to the quickening me to my duty, or restraining me from any wickedness! But as to my riper Ripe age. years, OLord, I know not what to fay: I should in truth P 3 fit-

Part IV. Chap, 6.

fit down aftonish'd before thee, but that I want a due sense of my finfulness. Mine iniquities are gone over my head. That they are greater than I can bear, is little; they are greater than I can comprehend or number. Nay if I should let pass my fins of ignorance, of infirmity, of heedlesness and inadvertency, (by which notwithstanding I ferioufly acknowledg my felf, times without number, to have dishonoured and provoked thee :) If I should infift only upon my knowing, prefump tuous, and wilful fins, even thefe O Lord, it were impossible for me to reckon up. For besides that vast number of them, which I cannot call to mind (all which notwithstanding are upon record before thee) what a black and tedious Catalogue of them have I here open

open (or, which I can Part IV. spread) before thee! How ma- Chap. 6. ny wilful neglects, yea, even contempts of my duty! How many resolute perpetrations of horrid crimes! Such which I † now am ashamed even to think of, yet did not then require, blush to commit; Sins! the now may heinousness whereof being con- in this, and such fidered, if I could do no-other plathing else but mourn over them ces, be exall my days, though I should with often weep, as my Saviour sweat, in or someclots of blood, under unknown, imes. anguish and agonies, I could not but account my felf impenitent. Nay, had I only that one fin of [**] so often by merepeated to bewail, what forrow could fuffice for its

But if I add hereunto my [**] my [**] &c. what rea-

due lamentation?

Here are to be mentioned thy chiefest and most frequent sin or sins.

P 4

fon

Part IV. Chap. 6.

fon have I, were my fasts, confessions, prayers, and tears a thousand fold to what they are or can be, to sit down and lament my notorious impenitence!

Actual fins aggravated.

And besides this weight of guilt, which the hainous nature of my fins themselves loads me with, what a fad additional pressure do their dismal aggravations bring? What circumflance almost can there be that makes fin grievous, which I may not find in most of mine ? It is but an ordinary aggravation of my fins, that they have been committed against knowledge, that I have held thy truth in unrighteousness, and, being convinced of my duty, have both neglected it, and done contrary unto it :

Against Conscience. The very instant dictates of conscience, protesting against

the

the fins which I have been a- o bout to commit; the fmitings Chap.6. of mine own heart, not only after and before, but amidst the very commission of them, have not restrained my head-strong will.

† Nay, O Lord, hath not the voice of the Spirit joyned with Against the voice of my Conscience, vings of and the united perswasions of the spirit. both striven with me, but all in vain? Have I not known that if I would resist, through thy grace I should overcome? And might I not through the same grace, have resisted if I would? † Have not I at the very fame time thought of thy wrath and eternal flames belonging to those who do such things? and yet this in vain too.

And besides the vow of my Against Baptism, which I have owned vows. and acknowledged my felf to fland.

P 5

Part IV. Chap. 6.

At the

Lord's

Table.

frand bound by, Ah! Lord, have I not made many a particular vow against those very sins, which after, as a Dog to his vomit, I have returned to; And † those vows brought to thy Table, and sealed in the Blood of thy Son? Have not I tasted thy mercies, encourageing mine obedience, and on the contrary, sometimes wrung out almost the dregs of thy wrath in punishment of my backslidings.

Against Mercies and Judgments,

Against hindrances. Further, hast not thou many a time hindred me in my prosecution of these sins, and by some interposing providence, dulled the temptation, which I lay under towards them? When yet I have proved so far a Devil to my self, as to retrieve the temptation, and over-bearing the voice of my conscience, the resistance of thy Spirit,

Spirit, breaking through all engagements to obedience, Part IV. which either thou or my felf have laid upon me, yea, and the very hindrances and lets, which have been put in my way against those sins, I have returned to the attempts and practices of them! Ah Lord! What can such a sinner be fit for, but destruction? And yet. after this fort, how long have I lived finning! And how have Continu-I hardened my heart against all ance in sia those means, which thou hast used for my betterment! Besides, How many of these my fins have been committed openly and in the fight of the Openness Sun, to the dishonour of thee, and to the scandal of others, who beholding my practices, have blasphemed, at least been provoked to blaspheme, and speak evil of Christianity ! All

NA Part IV. Chap. 6. S Confessi. on of later fins.

All this, O Lord, is but my old wickedness: I have later [and + rhcrefore, if possible, some of them more grievous] fins to confess unto thee. It is but [fuch or fuch a time or day!

ter falls.

that I [**] Ah Here mention ba- how can I lift up my face or look to-

wards thee, my fo oft offenden God!

Confess. on of my other

And yet, notwithstanding all this, I have not yet done, O Lord. For besides these sins of mine own, what a multitude of mens fins. the fins of other men do I stand accessary unto and guilty of! How many, for ought I know, have I undone by my example! What a multitude is there, whose profaneness and unbelief (being occasioned by the scandal against Religion, which my loofness hath possest them with) Liam to answer for ! + Some there

there are, whom I have more directly and neerly corrupted. Chap. 6. And how many more may they have corrupted, who haply had not been in that case corrupt themselves, had not I propagated fuch fins to them ! Ah! wretched man that I am, who have not been fo far innocent as to be wicked alone, and destroy no more than my felf.

And now, O Lord, after I Confession have confessed thus much, not-on of imwithstanding all which I have penitence, confessed, and much more which I am not able to express, nor fo much as to recollect or view, what an hard, unbroken, and stupid heart have I! The truth is, the multitude and grievousness of my fins is such, as is enough to make me impenitent and desperate upon the reflection on them. † I may well doubt.

Chap. 6.

doubt, whether it be possible. Part IV. that such a backsliding wretch as my felf should ever be renewed again unto repentance,

or thereby restored.

Address of affi. ance, or casting the foul on God for mer-CY.

But forasmuch as I understand. that to turn thus desperate, and. to neglect repentance & amendment of life, would be worfe than all the wickedness, which Lhave hitherto wrought, I am here prostrate before thee to bewail my felf, and with forrow and grief of heart for my former. ways do I here cast my felf upon thee. If thou wilt have mercy, thou canst still save me : If thou wist not, Lord, I perish. But doestathou use to suffer those to perish, who thus with fuch repentance as they can, fubmit and humble themselves at thy footstool, crying unto thee for help? Far be it from thee, thou Father of Mercies!

Not-

Notwithstanding, in as much as I, being much worse than ordi- Chap. 6. nary finners, do more justly deserve to find no place for repentance, and have therefore more reason to fear how thou mayst deal with me, deal with me as thou wilt, + through thy Refolution grace I will fin no more; no fin repremore knowingly and prefump- fented to tuously, as I have done. And to God. that end I have here in thy prefence this day confidered my ways: I have endeavoured to find out those wiles and methods, by which the Devil and mine own lusts have enfnared me in such grievous sins. + I have resolved upon impartial diligence as well in my endeavours against these particular evils as against all other, and in performing unto thee hearty and entire obedience. These Resolutions I here humbly prefent

Petition. For ac-

fent before thee, facredly en-Part IV. gaging my felf to do my utmost to keep them, and befeeching thee by thy grace to ceptance, engage my heart more firmly to them. And, Lord, let not any dulness or want of that affection, with which I ought to have confessed my fins, to have bewailed my guilt, and to have passed these resolutions, hinder, that this my ferious humiliation of my felf should not be accepted before thee. Such contrition, as thou hast enabled me to, I have endeavoured, forrowing that I am not more deeply humbled; fuch, which is wanting, do For more thou beftow; For it is no less thy property to bestow than accept the contrite heart: The broken spirit is, O Lord, from thee. When thou of old commandedst water out of the flin-

brokenness of heart.

obedient streams: nor can my Chap. 6. heart (dry and hard as it is) but dissolve into holy tears, if thou wilt bid it melt: Give forth then the word, O God; Speak, thy fervant is here ready to hear. Turn thou me and I shall be turned. Send out rough thy good Spirit : let it enligh- and parten the eyes of my mind, in the ticular convertiknowledg both of my felf and on. thee: let it favingly perswade me of the truth of all that thou hast spoken, and especially, of the defiling, curfed, and damning nature of fin, of the fufficiency and efficacy of the merits of Christ Jesus, unto all those, who by a right faith themselves to thee through him. (I do, O Lord. believe, help my unbelief.)
And grant that this fight and perswasion both of my sin and Savi-

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

Saviour may affect mine heart, fo that I may forrow after a ogodly fort: and that forrow may bring forth in me those wholfom fruits (which after all my endeavours of Repentance I cannot but lament to be much wanting in me, to wit) carefulness against fin, vehement define and zeal of boliness, indignation and an holy revenge against my self; by all which I may for the future clear my felf, and ever approve mine heart honest, upright, and sincere before thee.

For perfeverance.

Suffer not this my righteousness to be only, as a morning cloud or early dew; soon
passing away, but let thy
grace always dwelling in me
keep open in my soul an everflowing Fountain of such penitence, that I may go on thus
mourning to mourn over my
sins

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fins, and perfecting holiness in thy fear; accounting all little Chap. 6. enough, if so be I may but in the end obtain mercy. And for Justithis my penitent return (at least fication. hearty endeavour of fuch return) accompanied with persevering study of impartial obedience to thee, do thou, however most unworthy in it self, through the perfect merits of thy Son, accept, washing away all my fins (both the iniquities of my youth and transgressions ofmy riperyears, as well known as unknown) especial-Here mention ly my (**) in his thy chiefest sin or blood; and reckonfins. ing, according to thy graciousCovenant, this my faith (which by fuch works as these shall discover it self to be alive and true) unto me for righteousness. And, if thy infinite Wildom shall see it to be good for affafor

Part IV. Chap. 6. for me; do thougrant me this further happiness, that I thus living in thy fear, may be ever filled with peace and joy through a comfortable assurance of thy favour, and hopes of eternal Glory.

For outward comforts.

As to all my outward affairs, by thy good providence be thou pleased so to over-rule all events, that what soever befalls me may work together to me for good. My fins indeed, O Lord, deserve quite contrary; even the severest inslictions of thy wrath and fiery displeafure. And I do most seriously acknowledg that in all the judgments, which thou haft at any time laid upon me, thou halt used much mercy, All the pains, which my body hath felt; all the losses, which have impaired my estate; all the slanders, which have blafted my name

Confession as to judgment.

name (particularly **) I em- Part IV. brace as infinitely less than my deferts. That I am Here mention in any straits [* *] ny particular afthat I suffer otherwise (in my body, relations, &c. * *) were all a thoufandfold to what it is, I should confess it to be most just. Were I to enjoy no more good than Ido deserve, I should have just nothing. Righteous therefore art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee. Yet if thou wilt be intreated by thy re- Deprepenting fervant, to † with them. draw (* or withold) * These and such thy hand; to remove like expressions are the punishment I feel to be used accordfor not to inflict the ing to persons punishments which I particular condifear) but through the blood of Christ to deliver me from thy prefent wrath, as well as from the wrath to come,

thy

thy fervant shall ever bless and Chap. 6. praise thee, and be able to serve thee with more chearful diligence. However, Lord, thy Will be done, bring me furely to thy felf, let it be by what means thou wilt: Please thy felf, thy fervant will endeavour to be fatisfied . Deny me what things thou wilt, only deny me not Grace, Pardon, and thy Self; I can ask nothing greater, and, Bleffed be thy Name, it is thy will that I should be content with no thing less.

Interceffion.

And not only upon me, O Lord, but upon all men do thou have mercy, according to the gracious pleasure of thine own most holy Will. Especially upon the Universal Church; enlarge thou its bounds; provide for its fafety and purity, delivering any part of it, which

is in danger; and reforming Part. I whatfoever of it is corrup-Chap. 6. ted Do thou with all fuitable mercies bless this particular Church: Forgive the publick fins (* *): Heal * Here mention the publick Calami-Such fins or calaties (**). Preserve mities. and every way be gracious unto the King's Majefty, his Queen, and all the Royal Family. Let all thy Priests be cloathed with Righteousness, and let thy work prosper in their hands: and especially within this Parish, of which I am apart, let the knowledge and fear of thee increase. Visit all

my Kindred, Relations, and Acquaintances (**) with fuch bleffings as they need. Reward a thousand fold all who have shewn any kindness

Part. IV. (**) Forgive and have mercy upon all mine Enemies, and let not one of them ever fare the

In all these vacancies thus marked (**) make such particular mention as thy condition shall require, or prudence suggest. worse for any wrong done to me. Deliver in thine own good time thy righteous ones out of all their afflictions, and in the mean time support them, sanctifying all unto them. (**)

Shew thy felf every way alfufficient unto all thine.

Thankfgiving. Finally, O Lord, I bless and praise thy glorious grace, for all those blessings which I enjoy, and those particular deliverances, whether ancient or later, which thou hast vouchsafed me. (**) Above all, for thy redeeming, not only me, but the whole humane nature, by the precious blood of

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of thy well-beloved Son; for that knowledge which I have Chap. 6. of thee in him my Saviour Christ Jesus; for any sight and sense of my sin, which through thy Grace I have; for any hopes of finding mercy in that great day.

(**) I, O Lord, am Here bless God far less than the least for any inward of these thy mer-

cies. It is thy good-

ness, thy goodness alone, which is the fountain whence they came: And mayst thou from me, and from Heaven and Earth, ever receive the glory of that thy goodness. May I ever serve thee in newness of life and answerable walking.

And do thou forgive not Cord foonly my former ingratitude, ry Petitibut my present want of thank- ons.

fulness, together with all the

Part, IV. Chap. 6. fins of these my holy things, washing me, and my very tears, prayers, and penitence, in the blood of my Savious Christ Jesus, in whose words thy servant will speak yet once more,

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Our Father, &c.

It is not to be supposed, that this Prayer without any alteration will suit with the condition of every Reader: God forbid, all should have sinned at that rate, to come up to which this Prayer was framed. The prudent Christian therefore is to add, leave out, alter what he sees good; or, if able himself, to do better, and lay aside all Nothing is here obtruded on any, only directions and help intended to some who need them.

K de T Da Toloct, let

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

Off Offerings to God for the use of the poor; departure out of the Closet, and behaviour afterwards.

MY Prayers being thus finished, I should not hastily run out, but pause a while and remember, that there is one work remaining, which is pot to be neglected, if I have wherewithal to do it, being itis required by God in an accepta-Me Fait : and that is, to add fomething every Fast, though it be the less to what I have formerly laid alide for the poor; or if there be no fuch stock already made by me, much more then to delign and devote somewhat to that purpose. This is the fast I have chosen, to deal thy 1sa 58. 6. bread unto the hungry, &c. It being 7. thus given, I may deal it when I shall fee occasion. Now as to the particular manner of this practice, directions have been above given, which especially upon these days it will be expedient to observe.

ceto Part. IV. Chap. 6. ന്നാ

And this being done, let me with chearfulness depart my Closet; let not my behaviour be without innocent alacrity: And let it be my fpecial care, so to order all my carriage on these my Fasts, that they may not, if possible, be taken notice of by any but my felf and God; as being mindful of that command of my Saviour's, Anoint thy head, and

Mat. 5.17. wash thy Face, that thou appear not unto men to fast, that is, behave thy felf with fuch outward chearfulness (of which, anointing the head and washing the face were Arguments) that no man ordinarily beholding thee, would take the day he fees thee fo, to be one of thy Fast or Mourning days.

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CHAP. VII.

Of great and more extraordinary Fasts, and the work of them.

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Desides these my Fasts which come in course, at least once a week, several occasions may befal me, which may require an extraordinary Fast. Such is any great evil hanging over mine head, or my friends, or the Nations, any confiderable change of my way of it-ving, or the like: but especially, when I am to receive the Holy Communion.

My work upon such occasions will be the same, as is formerly directed to: only my Christian discretion will order it with a particular respect to that my great occasion which calls me to fast: which occasion lamespecially to meditate upon (and that not without a regard had to my Sins: if there be any evil

Q 3. which.

ccon Part. IV. Chap. 7.

which I deprecate, to consider how my fins have been the causes of it; if any good, for which I supplicate, how again my fins may blaft that) and accordingly to commend it to God in my prayers: in which case also the form of prayer delivered in the foregoing Chapter will not be useless.

Particularly; as to that which will most frequently come in practice, my humiliations preparatory for the Lord's Supper. In these, besides that examination of my felf, which in ordinary course I make, I am to look over mine Accomptal, to see every week fince my last communicating, what my carriage hath been, how I have amended, especially in those particulars, in which I had formerly taken notice of my miscarriages, and vowed reformation. All my revolts and backslidings are to be attentively viewed in themfelves and in their aggravations; and repentance, as before taught, to be, with all diligence and fervour that I can exercifed. But in case I am a new communicant, and now making

305

ing my first addresses unto the Lord's com Table, or in case I have formerly Part. IV. been there, but not with fo due pre- Chap. 7. paration as I now would make, although the former rules of the practice of humiliation and repentance contain the chief part of my duty, vet directions more particular are provided.

Yea, and besides these times of special exigence, ought I to be often furveying and looking over mine Accomptal. In mine ordinary daily devotions, or in my devotions upon my fast-days I shall find both need and opportunity for it Andif Scholars find it necessary to peruse their own Collections or Common-place books; if Shopkeepers review often their books, to the end they may, by feeing what they have formerly done know how to order their future proceedings in their business, so as not togo backward, or be diligent to no purpose, how much more careought I to take in the concernments of my foul, and for that Tewel which if I lofe, although! should gain the whole world, I am irreparably undone.

Part. IV. Chap. 8.

CHAP. VIII.

The Conclusion.

HE Author of this fmall piece, Christian Reader. is very fure, that be thou who thou wilt, thou canst not but approve for the main that practice, which is here commended to thee: although there should be some particulars (as to the observation of Holy days or the like) which may not fuit with the humour of every mans devotion. Confident he is, he faith, that the daily practice of Reading, Meditation, Self-examination, Prayer, the orderly and due practice of His miliation, Mortification, and the rest of those Substantials, which are here directed to, cannot be gainfaid. It might have

Plivate Devotion.

have been better taught, but part. IV. he hath done it as well, and as Chap. 8 plainly as he could. Being cons therefore that thou can'ft not but say, he is a good man who thus lives, and wish that thou ever hadst lived so, he chargeth it again upon thy conscience, thus to live: else art thou selfcondemned, and guilty of known negligence and omifsion. Thou dost not endeavour what, not with standing, thy conscience cannot but approve. He is confident further, that if thou didst but feel that peace, quiet, joy, and happiness, which fuch practice leaves behind it, if thou hast any sense what it is to have a clear Conscience, and therefore free and chearful access to God, and an humble. fearlefness of the face of men. which without some such praclice as this thou canst never have

308 COD Park IV Chip. 8.

have, thou needell no other argument to quicken theboto this practice. hinden greater happiness on sarth, than for a man to be at peace wich, and like himfelf, and get that peace by any boother doorfe, than fuch exercise of Godiness, such circumspection over all thy ways, as hach been here taught, and thou shalt have leave to neglect all; but if thou canst not, then think thy felf bound to thefe practices. For directions in the making use of the Book, thou hast them in the Admonition to the Reader, in the beginning of the Book, whither return and read the whole over again: It will be no whit worse the second time read: And fo God bless it and thee lo significant high without fome fuch

FINIS.

PERSWASIVES

DIRECTIONS

To the frequent and Holy use

OF THE

LORD'S SUPPER.

By way of Appendix to the Method of Private Devotion.

By the fame Author.

2 Cor. 3. 4.

Having renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, we walk not in craftiness, nor handle the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commend our selves to every mans Conscience in the sight of God.

London, Printed for T. Sawbridge in Little Britain, R. Bentley in Covent-Garden, and G. Wells in St. Paul's Church-yard, 1684.



PERSWASIVES

WITH

DIRECTIONS

To the frequent and Holy use OF THE

Loids Supper.

By way of an Appendix to the Method of Private Devotion.

CHAP. I.

A Proposition of the particular Matters to be treated of in this Discourse.

PRivate Devotion was never defigned to take us off from, but prepare us for the publick worship of God. Wherefore, as in our private Method consideration hath Aa 3 been

been had, and accompt endeavou-Chap. r. red, touching those secret duties in the Closet, which publick Prayer, hearing the Word, and fanctifying the Lord's day require of us in order to their due performance, so is it but justice now that we confider what particular work in the Closet the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper will find our devotion. And forafmuch, as upon the very first thoughts of this most Divine and Heavenly Ordinance, if reflecting withal on common practice, we cannot but observe a double fault very rife in this our Israel, Neglett on the one side, fome coming not at all or very feldom, and of Temerity on the other, in them who come to it (and perhaps often) but consider not much either how or why they come; it ought to be our care to avoid both these rocks, and as commanded both to do it often, and with due remembrance of him whose death we thereby thew forth till he come.

CHAP. II.



Considerations to move to frequenting the Lords Supper.

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To move me to be a frequent guest at the Lord's Table; let me duly consider the Obligations which Iye upon me thereunto: Some my Saviour, some the Church, some my very own condition and wants lay upon me.

SECT. I.

Obligations from Christ.

First, My Saviour's very instituting a means by which I might be so intimately united, and as it were mixt with him, obliges me not only in point of Ingenuity but Gratitude. For, let me lay it to heart, May this earthen body of mine, polluted as it is with a world of sins, be yet made the temple and receptacle of my glorious Lord, Aa 4 nay,

nay, in a fort have his body incor-Chap. 2. porated with it, and is it possible I can be fo dull as not to move with all might and haft to the means of fuch advancement? Such Brutishness and baseness of spirit is not furely incident into a reasonable creature, if duly considerative. But then let me remember, My Lord's body was pierc'd, and torn, and given to death for me; his blood spilt for the remission of my fins, and will not this endear the means of its participation to me? Is there an expedient contrived and method appointed by my very crucified Saviour himself, by which I may come and take my share of that very body which hung on the Cross for me, of that blood, by which I believe and hope for the remission of my sins; and can I be so irreligiously ungrateful as not to comeatit? Are neglects the only fit retribution to repay unto my crucified and bleeding Lord, bleeding for me too, offering me still his blood? I cannot fure turn my back.

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Further, A fecond obligation my Saviour laid upon me, by that Chap. 2. strange zeal of love towards me and the humane nature, with which he came to the institution of this Sacrament. When he speaks of his own passion, before he entred upon it, I have a Baptism, saith he, to be bap- Luke 12. tized with, and bow am I straitned 50. till it be accomplished? He feems even to have longed to fuffer for us, to have thought the time tedious till he had been betray'd, and fcoff't, and fcourged, and tortured, and had bled for us (for a mixture of love and of desire of accomplishing his work, conflicting with natural dread of the foreseen cup. must that his being straitned speak) and all this at the beginning of that very Supper, after which he instituted this Sacrament. desire (the word is used for Lust) have I desired to eat this Passeover Luke 222. with you before I suffer. As if he 15had faid, within these few hours I shall be led away to suffer for you, which (fuch is my love to you) I long for. But before that, I have Aa Si ano-

another no less passionate an appe-Chap. 2. tite to fatisfie, and that is of instituting of that Sacrament by which you, and all that shall believe in my Name to the end of the world, may be made partakers of that Body and Blood, which I am about to give for you and them. Let me lay then this to heart: can I now add unnaturalness to my disingenuity and ingratitude, and turn my back on my dying Saviour, when he is now greedy and most passionately desirous, I might take my part of that Body and Blood which was given for my redemption?

> If defires move not, yet furely commands may, for these are most

directly obligatory.

Thirdly then, If my dying Saviour did not command me this, and command it too in remembrance of his death and passion, and to shew forth his death till he come, the neglect might possibly feem more tolerable. But now, fince to the importunity of the Sacrament's own nature, and our Lord's most paffioti-ch

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passionate desires to have it instituted, he hath added his commands Chap. 2. alfo, three times recorded by the Evangelists, and once by St. Paul, that it might not be deemed an unnecessary matter, & which could be fpared, shall I to my disingenuous and unnatural ingratitude, add direct disobedience and rebellion? Shall I stand out against all those obligations which heaven can lay upon me? Will I neither be won by fuch institutions, which even ingenuity and natural ambition would prompt me to embrace, nor moved by the most passionate entreaties of a dying Saviour, nor awed by peremptory commands to task and take what is fo provided? What can I, in case I still stand out, think of my felf? What can I fay in mine own excuse? Or what can I look for, but to be denied my portion in that blood, the participation of which, against such obligations from my Saviour. I have, thus neglected?



SECT. II.

Obligations from the Church.

P Esides this, the Church hath D laid obligations upon me hereto, both by its Practice, Command

and Discipline.

As to the Practice of the Church. it will not be easie to pitch upon any publick degeneracy in the prefent Church, which the practice of the Primitive Church doth more upbraid us of, than infrequent and feldom communicating. In all likelihood immediately after our Lord's. Ascension, and the Descension of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles, and those early Proselytes of Christianity daily received the Lord's Supper: which though a most learned person, who more than once affirmed it most probable, (from Acts 2.) afterwards feems to doubt.

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Epist. 118. yet I doubt less of, forasmuch as-St. Austin acquaints us it was usual even in his days. However that none of their folemn Assemblies in

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the ancient Church were without a Communion, is most certain Chap. 22 from all antiquity: and the Scripture it felf testifies expresly as to Acts 20. 7. the Lord's day: The restauration of which pious course, that our Church at the Reformation defigned, is from hence most evident, that there is no Lord's day nor Fe-Lival throughout the year, which hath not a peculiar Communion

Service appointed for it.

If the practice of the Primitive and purer Church move us not, I confess there is reason to fear the injunctions of our particular Church will but little avail. However, he who bid us account that brother as Matth. 18: an Heathen and Publican who refu- 17. fed to hear the Church, thought fure that her commands had no small obligation on her children. And the Apostle that commanded us to obey those that rule over us, Heb. 13. and submit our selves to them, in as 17. much as they watch for our fouls; and withal added, that it is unprofitable for us, that by reason of our untractableness they should be able

only.

only with grief to give account to chap. 2. heaven of us, conceived it fit we 'should be obedient to such wholefome Laws, as those our Rulers should give unto us.

> Now the fubstance of the Commands of our Church in this cafe we find in the Rubrick at the end of the Communion, that in all Parishes every Parishioner communicate, at least thrice a year. is the least our Church will tolerate, not but that it is evident she should have her Children more frequently to communicate, as appears from that expression at the least thrice; but considering the common backwardness of people, the commanded what the might have hopes to obtain, the least which poffibly (the generality of mens occasions being all considered) fhe could judg in any fort tolerable, and that was thrice a year. Wherefore in Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, it is enjoyned (as in the precedent part of the same Rubrick) that all the Ministers thereof communicate (except

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in case of reasonable impediments, of which negligence undoubtedly chap. 2. is none) every Lords day at least; that expression intimating (as well as another [viz. on Holidays if there be no Communion] a little before) that it was fit and requisite that commonly on days of Solemn Assemblies, as are Lords days and Holidays, there should be a Communion.

Of this requiring of her Ministers (where in convenient number to make up a Communion) that they should thus often communicate, whereas the people feem left at greater liberty, I suppose the reason is, because she presumes and requires them to be of stricter lives and fanctity than the common So that it will from hence follow that our Church judgeth it requifite to all persons, who would live strictly and more devote to God, than the common fort, who too much incumber themselves in the world, frequently, if not weekly, to communicate.



As to Discipline, it hath been Chap. 2. most reasonably adjudged, that the fevere sentence of Excommunication is most justly due to such who neglect the participation of the Lords Supper. The Canon enjoyneth the Minister and Church-warden to fignifie fuch: The Church-warden is bound upon his oath, as the Minister by the fidelity he owes to the Church, to make presentment of fuch. And amongst those particular cases for which by Statute. the Writ to take the Excommunicate person lies, not receiving the Communion is one expresly. Which fevere Discipline none can justly blame, who considers, that such persons do in a manner Excommunicate themselves, or will grant, that the Church and the Magistrate are bound not to fee the Commands of Christ, and Ordinances of the Gospel neglected, but to constrain such, who have subjected themselves to the Gospel, to obedience to it, where they will not voluntarily perform it. And it feems reasonably demandable, why

a man should be punished for swearing, for prophaning the Lords day, Chap. 2. or the like crimes (as those who blame the feverity of this Law judge fit) if he may not be punished for gross neglett of the Lords Supper; feeing both equally offend against Divine commands. not then but in reason think my felf bound frequently to communicate by the obligations which the primitive and prefent Church lay upon me.

SECT. III.

Of obligations from within.

L Aftly, doth not my own con-dition and wants strongly importune and oblige me to it?

1. Have I so faithfully kept the covenant of my Baptism, and those latter vows and engagements which I have made to God, that I do not need to renew them? Alas! have I been faithful to any one of them? Now what so proper or firm renovation of them as by this fecond

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Sacrament? If I have broken my Chap. 2. covenant, I have certainly forfeited the benefits I covenanted for Grace, pardon of my fins, and life eternal. And how can I expect these, if when God daily offers to receive me again into Covenant (as he doth by this Sacrament) I neglect to come in, and enter covenant. But possibly that I think I can do, by fetting down private resolutions in my Closet, without coming in publick to the Lords Table: Let me enquire then further:

2. Are all my corruptions fo mortified, and graces fo ftrong that fingle vows will hold me? Do not I daily find a double, yea treble and manifold cord (all the methods which I can invent or use to confirm my resolutions) to be little enough, and (God knows) many times too little? And must I not confess this Sacrament instituted by Christ as the primary and most Soveraign means of strengthening me? Nay, do not I find in my own experience, possibly, that of all the vows that ever I made in

my life, I have been most cautious of those which I sealed in the blood of my Saviour? Though possibly (wretch that I am!) I have broken some of them, yet I broke them most difficultly. With what conscience then, can I absent my self from, and neglect this Sacrament? Am I asraid of making my vows too strong? But perhaps, I am jealous of my self, that I shall break even these vows thus renewed, and thus sealed, and therefore fear by new communicating I shall only aggravate my succeeding falls. Let me consider this case:

Is my guilt like to be any whit the less, because I do not strive against sin as much as I may, and use against it all means I have? As in my present state, I despond in a manner of my own standing: of the two it is more likely, I shall be able to overcome when I struggle to the last effort, & leave no means unattempted, by which I may strengthen my self and get above mine enemies, than when I neglect the means I have to gain strength. Certain-



Iv if I endeavour my utmost against Chap. 2. known and deliberate fins, God will not charge every flip or furprifal as a cancelling of this my renewed Covenant. But possibly I diftrust my felf and fear I shall not do all I can, to fland : In this case to come to a fort issue, either I do resolve for happiness or not: If I resolve not for happiness indeed, 'tis no matter, whether I communicate or no; I am a perfon desperate, who have given up my felf to Sin and Hell. If I do resolve for happiness, it is certain I must resolve to exert my utmost might against every fin, and especially against such to which I am most subject. And if I have so re-folved, but distrust my own constancy to such passed resolves, I shall be willing and desirous to use all means to enforce, enfure and (if it were possible) constrain my felf to constancy; and God hath not appointed, nor can I find out a more Soveraign means than this of the Lords Supper. I am therefore in conscience, as I tender my own

own Salvation, to frequent it, and in case I should yet fall again, to forrow more deeply for fuch fupposed future falls than ever, to refolve and endeavour new amendment (as before considered in the practice of Repentance) to weigh Priv. Dewith my felf what a fad condition vot. Part.4. they are in , who have the abused Sect. 4, 5. blood of Christ to witness against them; from which estate there is no way in the world to rescue me. but refuming, with new vigor, my former good resolutions, and fresh addresses unto that blood for pardon and strength: Thus am I to persist in that daily practice of repentance, and mortification, and use of all means, especially this of this strengthening Sacrament, as often as I have opportunity; to the end I may rescue my self out of this fnare of the Devil. So that in fine, if this be my case I see my felf inexcufably accessary to my own ruine, if I neglect this recovering Sacrament.

Besides these, I have great reafon to fear there are other wants

in my foul, which oblige me to fre-Chap. 2. quent communicating. I enquire therefore further.

3. Do I use to keep all my accounts so even with God, and my heart in such a gracious frame, that I have not much need of that Ordinance, which shall bring me to fuch righting my accounts (I mean to the strict examination of my felf, touching new fins, reforming for the future, and fueing out the pardon of what is past) and to a more tender and heavenly temper of mind? Alas, is not there many a fin which I fall into in my days, which passeth me unrepented! And as to all my private Fasting and Humiliations of my felf, have I not need of some efficacious means, to make me more strict and careful. to deliver me from my usual slightiness and perfunctory performance of fuch duties? Again, Doth not many a day pass me, in which ! have great reason to complain of the want of a due sense of God, and my own duty, upon my heart? Do not I put up many a dull, and heedless

less and hard-hearted prayer? and must I not confess, that, as it is Chap. 2. very finful and dangerous thus to live, with particular fins unrepented of (or only carelelly confidered) and with an heart very much void of an heedful fear, or eying of God, fo that the Lords Supper is a very proper and effectual remedy to both these so dangerous and intolerable evils? Can I then impute either to frailty of my nature, and to common indispositions, incident from worldly business; if in the mean time I am conscious to my felf of my neglect of that Divine Ordinance, which would refcue me from both. I fee then that that happy condition, into which preparation for this Sacrament would fet me (of having matters straiter in a good measure between Heaven and my Soul, by reason whereof I should be fit for any thing, even death it felf) and that bleffed frame of spirit, into which both preparation and the frequent participation of the Ordinance it felf would bring me, render

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render the neglect most inexcusa-

Chap. 2. ble. Again,

4. Do I walk fo innocently, and with fuch exactness observe the rules of Charity, as that I have no need of that holy Seal of Christian Communion, which I dare not come unto, till I have reconciled my heart to every man living, and to my power made fatisfaction for every wrong I have done, and put an end to all unchristian contentions and animofities between me and others? Certainly my life is not fo purely inoffensive, but I wrong many, if not by deed yet by words, or at least by uncharitable furmifes and cenfures of them. and possibly too by fecret ill will and grudge. And are thefe things either unnecessary to be rooted out; or am I so ready and diligent in the doing of it, and in further reconciling my felf, and fatisfying my offended Brother, that for this purpose I have no need of this Sacrament, which shall enforce me after a fort thereto?

5. Is my Christian faith and hope fo ftrong, my comforts and Chap. 2. holy joys fo firm and advanced. that I find not this Seal of my union with my Saviour and pardon of all my fins most necessary? Should a dangerous disease befal me, or my life otherwise be hazarded, have I a confidence of my future happiness strong enough to bear me up above the terrors of death, and to fupply me with courage to endure whatever danger I may be brought into, even death it felf, rather than feek an escape by any unworthy means? Rather, were I now to die, would I not miferably tremble, and doubt of my future estate? Were I stript of all earthly comforts, should I not be miserably diffatisfied, and unable to quiet my felf,or meekly to endure the Cross with due respect unto the recompence of reward, of which I have not possibly fuch a well-grounded hope (much less such a certainty, perfwalion and affirance) as it concerns me to provide, for the arming my felf against all trials. And let



Chap. 2. come to be perplext with fears and doubts upon my death-bed, If I want courage, or behave my felf

want courage, or behave my felf basely in suffering, shall I not then, too late, a thousand times blame and bitterly cry out of my neglect of this sacred Ordinance? shall I not say, all I could have done had been little enough to support my spirit, and be ready to sink that I

have been so regardless?

Lastly: But suppose I have been To happy a man as to have behaved my felf fo Christianly in all these particulars, as that my conscience accuseth me not of any fault or defect (which I shall scarce find) either as to unfaithfulness in holiness, or neglectiveness of my great accounts, unmeet frame of spirit, uncharitableness, weakness of faith and hope, yet I shall have need of this Sacrament to keep me in this fo bleffed a Condition. Certainly I have not, nor can have any affin rance of my perseverance, (which the word of God will warrant or not call wild and prefumptuous) withwithout my use of those means, which the Gospel ordained, as well Chap. 2. for the continuance, as advance of me in grace. you the out to evitavish can I ablent my Liftrom it as any



SECT. IV.

The sum of all urged against the ordinary excuses.

TO fum up all then. Is the Lords Supper fo great a priviledge, yea, even advancement to my nature? Was my Lord fo passionately desirous to have it instituted? Did he now dying strictly charge me to eatthereof in remembrance of him? Doth the Church by her practice, command, and discipline, enjoyn and even force me to do it; and is the thing it felf fo exceeding needful and beneficial to me, being a renovation of my Covenant with God, a confirmation of my vows, and a strengthening me against all sins; year further, a means to place me in the full favour of God, and bring the to a most heavenly temper of B b 2 mind. Smith

mind, to renew, maintain and aug-Chap. 2. ment my charity, my faith, hope, and Christian comfort, and a prefervative of me all my days; and can I absent my self from it at any time, when I have occasion of receiving? Or if I once, or feldom absent my self from it, yet can I possibly live in the neglect of it? It is certain if I do, nothing of reason, Christianity, nor sense of my own interest can move me. Suppose Christ himself should speak from heaven (and fo he doth by his word and Ministry) suppose when I turn my back upon that prepared table, he should call to me from above, You Friend! I died for you, I commanded you when dying in remembrance of that my death, to eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, the benefit thereof is greater than you conceive; I have here commissionated my servants to give it you; here it stands prepared for you, my Church commands, invites, doth all possibly she can to bring you to it; can you turn your back upon this body, this blood of mine?

mine? Is it nothing to you, that it was given for you? nothing that Chap. 2. it is now offered to be given to you? Do you expect pardon, and grace, and life everlasting by the Sacrifice of it once upon the Cross, and can you neglect to partake of it here? What Answer could I make? Can I think in my confcience I should not be ashamed of making this? Lord, the Church profesieth she thinks that to receive it kneeling, is a reverence befitting fo facred a mystery. I think that reverence to be too much, (though there be neither express Scripture, nor evident reason for such my thoughts,) And, because I may not be so irreverent as I think fit, I will not come. In short: All objections I can make of things of this nature are either pure cavils, or matters very uncertain and difputable. The thing urged is a certain and undoubted duty: Now, am I just to my reason, or at all truly conscientious, if for matters dubious, (which (if the Church know more than I as in good man-B b 3 ners

Chap: 3.

ners I am bound to think) are fafe) I neglect so undoubted, weighty and beneficial a duty?

It can be no excuse to me, that I come not because I am not prepared, since to be unprepared is my sin: and to say, I wanted time to prepare my self, is as much as to say, I am not at leasure to be a Christian. I cannot therefore but see my self in conscience bound frequently to communicate, and it is sit I consult how frequently.

CHAP. III.

How often a Christian ought to partake of the Lords Supper, and at what age to begin.

done often, which doth not once begin to be done, therefore this Question how often ought I to-refort unto the Lords Table, includes this also, (which it is meet be first answered) How soon shall

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shall I come hither, or at what

Chap. 3.

feem to answer, at Sixteen years of age. But then, that passage is to be interpreted by others, which require that all persons now growing adult, be confirmed before their admission to the Lords Supper. So that the true answer to this Question depends upon the right understanding of Confirmation, of which briefly.

It is agreed by all fober men (chough possibly otherwise of different perswasions) that there should be some solemn transition from our Infant-Membership to our adult, that is, from our being Christian Children and as it were under age; to our being reckoned riper, and as it were Christians of our felves. To this purpose it is requisite, that being baptized in our infancy, when we could not personally take upon us the vow, and profession of Christianity, which was made in our names by others, we by our own choice openly take this vow and : B b 4

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and profession on our felves. This Chap. 3. the Church of England binds all to in binding them to be confirm'd, as is evident by the Office of Confirmation; and after fuch assump tion of this profession, and vow on themselves (following therein pure and primitive antiquity) the orders that they receive a Bleifing from the Bishop by imposition of his hards, after which they are reputed adult Members, and have a full right to the Ordinances of the Gofpel.

According to the true intent of this wholesom Order (whatever is practifed contrary) though indeed we are not to reckon every Episcopal Benediction to be properly Confirmation, & fo the intent of the Church is not contrariated fo often as otherwise we might fuspect) every person to be confirmed, is supposed to have been so far instructed, privately by his Parents or God-fathers and God-mothers. and more publickly catechized by the Minister, yea, and taught to understand the words, and sense of

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of the Catechism, that he is in Ma fome competent measure, able to Chap 3. give account of his faith, not poifibly by declaring it in a long formal oration, but by answering (as to the substance) such few plain matters as are immediately requifite to Salvation. And that this is the Churches intent, that all. persons come thus qualified to confirmation, both the Rubrick precedent, and the Preface unto the Office of Confirmation abundantly te-Now inafmuch as till fuch Stiffe. their Confirmation, and confequently fuch foregoing aptness, and understanding, young persons are. not to be admitted to the Lords-Supper, it is evident that the mind of our Church in answer to this. question is in short this; Every person, when come now to such competent years of discretion, that: he understands the main necessary matters of Christian faith, (in which his own word is not to be taken. but trial to be made by the Governours or Ministers of the Church) is to make a folema Profession of Bbs



tism, and of Christian faith in manner above intimated, and after this to be admitted to, and henceforth to frequent the Lords Supper. Now this the generality of people (supposing them Christianly brought up, and instructed) may be well able to do about sixteen years of age. About it, I say, for it is not to be thought the Church intended critically to insist upon two or three or six Months in this behalf.

But in case at fixteen years old, any are unable to give fuch account. of Christianity, as mentioned, I fee not that our Church admits them to confirmation, much less. to the Holy Communion. Yet is it by the way, most justly enjoyned, that all of Sixteen not communicating, be presented, to the end, that if any of that age are not duly infructed, both they and those who. have, or have had the care of them, may be admonished they suffer not their growing farther up in fuch ignorance, and unchristian neglects. Now

Now as to the frequent iterations of my addresses unto the Lords Chap. 3. . Table, by what I have above meditated touching the obligations which call me thither, I cannot but conclude, it is my duty to embrace every opportunity, which is given me : nor can I justifie any turning my back upon it, when God by his Ministers invites me thereto: my unpreparedness is my fault, it can be no excuse. True indeed, if unprepared, I may not in any wife presume to come; but in case of my abstaining, because unprepared, I am to account and bewail that, as a double fin; the one of neglecting the Lords Supper, the other of being in such an unchristian temper, that I was unfit for it, and could not without venturing my felf upon damnation perform my Christian duty. In most congregations at present, this Sacrament is so often administred, that all the Parishioners may partake thereof four times a year; but for my part, I fee not how I can approve that mans spirit, who would

Chap. 4.

would be content with it eight times a year, if with convenience and order he could have it oftner: And I befeech God not to lay to the charge of this Nation the great neglects of this the chief of Evangelical Ordinances, and highest advancement of the Christian soul on this side Heaven.

CHAP. IV.

Considerations to move to such care, and seriousness in received wing, as that we may received worthily.

This the eminency and dignity of this holy Mystery now mentioned, is a fit consideration to move me to the greatest care, and feriousness possible therein, which will preserve me from the second ordinary miscarriage of inconsiderateness, and consequently of mamorthiness, at the Lords Table. For,

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(1.) Shall I be heedless and vain in the highest, and most heavenly Chap 4. Ordinance? Am I convinced that I ought not to pray to God, or hear his word with an unprepared, or inconsiderate mind, much less with a heart regarding inwardly iniquity: and can I tolerate fuch a frame of spirit at the Lords Table? Doth the Prophet tell the house of Ifrael, that every man of them, who Ezek.14.4. fet up his idols in his heart, and put the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and came to the Prophet, him who thus came, the Lord would answer according to the multitude of his idols, and take him in his. own heart, that is, him who came to hear from the Prophet with a corrupt and wicked heart, having not before laid ande his beloved fins, or ungodly intentions by an impartial resolution of his duty (which could only turn the frambling block of his iniquities out of his heart) him the Lord would entertain, with all that displeasure which belonged to all the multitude of his abominations? Was. this;

this the entertainment of fuch? Chap. 4. how infinitely displeased then will he be at me if I come, not to receive his Word from his Prophet. but the body and blood of his Son with such an heart, as would provoke him not only in any meaner facred action, but in my common life; and when to this my real ungodlines, and rottenness of heart, I at once add the greatest prefumption, in daring to come, whither none but holy perfons are invited, and the greatest hypocrifie, in prerending by fuch coming I am of the number of those, who have cleanfed their hearts that they may be meet guests at so facred a feaft?

Further (2.) Let me take into consideration the vast advantages of having worthily received. It being supposed that I come with a meet heart, God by this Sacrament both bestows and seals to me all the benefits of the Covenant of Grace, and the blood of my Saviour.

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1. He thereby gives me of his Grace and Spirit, the true bread of Chap life, which feeds my foul to happiness; that is, he really communi- of worthy cates to me a Supernatural frength, receiving. whereby I may be able, if I will make use of it, to refift and overcome all temptations, to mafter all my lufts, to perform every duty of devotion to God, of Juflice and Charity to my neighbour, and of temperance and felf-denial as to my felf; to perform all those, I fay, and that in a most lively and spiritual fort; which I endeavouring todo, by exercise of this the grace of God, shall grow up in all Christian virtues, and comfortably still advance till I come to the meafure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: I shall be as a tree planted in the Courts of God, ever green and flourishing, and full of fruit : and being for shall be the delight of Meaven, and joy of holy Angels, and a comfort to my felf all my days

2. God further hereby makes over to me, and bestows on me the pardon.

pardon of all my sins, the merits of Chap. 4. his Son, and a full right to be in his Kingdom of Glory a co-heir with him, to whom I am by this Sacrament most intimately united. he gives me my Lords body, the fpiritual Bread of his Grace to strengthen my inward man, (as before confidered) so also his blood, to wash both soul and body from all original and contracted guilt, and to present them spotles, as that blood, in which they appear, before the throne of God: and being thus washed and purified, the merits of that blood are mine, even Heaven, and eternal life, which God hereby, I fav. makes over to me.

3. This the body and blood of my Saviour mystically and spiritually thus received by me turns even to my very body a feed of immortality, and of refurrection to 1 Cor. 15, eternal life. For, As in Adam all. died, fo in Christ shall all be made: alive; and particularly it is by union with the body of Christ, yea, even while they fleep in the duft, that

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that the bodies of Saints shall enjoy an happy refurrection; and this Chap. 4. union is by no means more intimately effected than by this Sacrament. And thus much the Christian Church hath from the Primitive days believed, Ignation (whose Epifeles came in the ancient Church next in authority to the Apostolical ones, as they did in antiquity) calls the elements thus received a porion of immortality and an antidote against death, that is against In Epistal. the power and sfinal prevalence ad Ephelthat fweet Singesti lo thiw tuo

Laftly, as God hereby gives and makes over all those benefits, so he feals to the faithful heart this his gift, ensures and afcertains it as of his present giving the Spirit, and pardon to it, fo of his future granting an happy refurrection, and eternal life: and what more firm and precious Seal can he fet thereto, than this, that he makes us partakers of the body and blood of his Son, as a pledge of our being at present in his favour and love, and of our certain future being in

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Bosom, and Kingdom? It is certain by the constant experience of all devout and ferious Christians that there is no means under heaven which fills them with more assured confidence of Glory, with higher transports of holy joys, and ravishing comforts, than doth the due participation of this facred Mystery. It gives them such holy lifts to the throne of their glorified Saviour, whom they feed on, that they fearce know whether they are not there; and are ready to call out with that fweet Singer of our Israel:

Mr. Herbert.

Give me my captive soul, or take My body also thither : Another lift like this would make Them both to be together.

The confideration of all which. as it should beget in me an holy appetite and hunger after this heavenly chear; fo it cannot, if duly confidered, but make me very ferious and devout in my approaches? inasmuch as it is certain, all those benefits are miss't, and it is only

an empty Feast, if I receive unwor-

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Chap. 4-

But yet (3.) there is somewhat elfe which may further move me to the highest care herein; to wit, besides the loss of so great good, the vaft, and almost unparallel'd danger of coming unworthily. There are two things which make dangers great; the eminency of the evil incurred, & mens obnoxiousness, or aptness to incur it; and both points are very considerable in the prefent cafe.

1. There is scarce in all the Scripture an expression which bears fuch a terrible import of certain damnation or judgment, as doth that of eating and drinking damnation to our felves. It would feem 1-Cor. 11. to intimate a mans having swallowed his own condemnation. And what fin, faving only the unpardonable fin, do we judge more hainous than the betraying and crucifying the Lord of life? What wretch like Judas? Now the Apoffle in a manner placeth all unworthy receivers in a parity of guilt

1 Cor. 11.

guilt with him, when he faith, Who-Soever shall eat this bread, or drink this cup unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lords

Heb. 6.6.

Heb. 10. 29.

Guilty, if not of the crucifying afresh the Lord of life, and putting him to open shame, yet of treading under foot the Son of God, and counting the blood of the Covenant, wherewith only he can be sanctified an unholy thing. The Christian Church only believes touching this fin, that by deep repentance, and amendment it is pardonable (that blood having of old healed even those who spilt it) but that certainly it is a fin of the highest nature, next to that of despite, or blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. True, the guilt is greater or less, according to the knowledge and means, which the offending persons have had to have prepared themselves; but in all, certainly very great. And, as the danger is thus great, by reason the guilt thus incurred is fo certain, and so grievous, so is it by reason of our aptness to incur it. What experience have I of the bafe.

base slightiness and sloth of mine own heart? how apt am I to Subber Chap. 4. over Devotions, and to dispense with lame preparation? And can I think the enemy, who continually watches to plunge me in the deepest guilt, will not be ready to help on my facility towards perfunctoriness, when he is fure it will involve me in fuch wretched guilt? Confidering this therefore, that I take the ready couffe to enfure: mine own condemnation, if I come unworthily, and that partly of my own Nature, partly by instigation of mine enemy, I am prone thus to presume upon my own ruine; ought I not to be awakened to the highest care and seriousness of devotion in this matter?

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Chap. 5.

CHAP. V.

In what points that care confifts, which he must take, who would be a worthy Communicant.

But I what care is that, which will fecure me from this danger, and what are the particulars of that Devotion, which will render me a northy Communicant?

In answer hereunto, it is certain, First, that if I come not with a truly penitent, faithful, thankful, and charitable heart, honestly resolved upon impartial endeavours of suture holiness, I come to this Sacrament unworthily; care therefore must be taken beforehand that I come with this medding Garment to this seal of the Espousals between my Lord and my soul.

And Secondly, it is as certain, that if I behave my felf with lightness, vanity, or indulged dulness;

or in any fort but with the intention, and height of present devo- Chape ;.) tion. I behave my felf unworthily there. Care therefore must be taken that my mind be thus kept at home, and intent upon this heavenly Feast, while I am there to feed thereon. and Firth, of what hart

And Laftly, It is no less certain, that if after reception hereof, I remit my diligence, and thinking now, as to all which is past, I have made even with God, begin to take to my felf more liberty of life, than what, before receiving, I could judge tolerable; or any otherwise grow heedless of my vows; I render my felf consequently an unworthy receiver. Care therefore must be had of my future carriage, and ways, that they answer my engagements.

Now as to directions in all thefe points, they may be fetcht from that most excellent Book, The whole Partit. 3. duty of man, where they are very faithfully and plainly laid down (A Book which he who writes this,

Chap. 6.

this, commends to his Readers study, as they love their Souls). Not-withstanding, lest every reader should not have it at hand, and lest the present work should be more impersect, brief consideration shall be taken of each point; and First, of what is sit to be done by way of preparation.

CHAP. VI.

of more remote preparation; the Doctrine of the Lords Supper briefly opened.

In order to my taking a perfect account what my particular preparation should be for the Lords Supper, it is meet I consider with my self, whether I have formerly received it, or whether now at first I come thereto. And if I have formerly received, whether I now think in my conscience, I then came thereto duly prepared or no. If I either now first come to receive,

ceive, or now first seriously fet my felf (deeply bewailing my former unworthiness) to endeavour approving my felf a worthy Receiver, my first care must be that I understand the doctrine of this holy Mystery, which it will be most proper for me to fetch out of that good practical Book (containing the substance of Christian duties) which I am above supposed to have chosen to my felf to read, and make But if any have it not my own. better and more at large, the fubstance of it is briefly this.

All Mankind having finned, and fo forfeited that happiness which the first Covenant promised only to unfinning and perfect obedience, were in a state of present and future misery; when it pleased God, out of his meer goodness, to promife, and in fulness of time, to fend us a Redeemer, who should bear our fins in his own body on the crofs, and by his blood establish a new Covenant between God and us, on those terms, that if we would uniformly and impartially Cc receive

receive the Gospel (that gracious Chap. 6. rule of life) which he should deliver unto us, yielding thereunto the obedience of Faith, and persevering therein, this Faith, through the merits of our Saviour, should be reckoned unto us for righteoufness, all our fins, through the fame his merits, should be forgiven, plenty of grace be poured irto our hearts, and a Crown of everlasting life, which by his blood he purchased, should be given And this, that we on unto us. our part might be able to fulfil, he not only in his own good time most clearly revealed what he required of us, preffed with the moft powerful motives and incentives to commend it to us, but fent his Spirit both to incline, and enable us to what God, and our own happinels, according to these terms, required of us. And that we might be assured, that he on his part would perform what he had promised, he appointed certain solemn and religious Rites to be obferved by us, which as often as we should

should come unto, we should vow to do our part, and he, under our Chap. 6. use of such religious Rites, would both impart to us strength to perform that our vow, and feal unto us our pardon of all that should be then past, and of future falvation, the things which he on his part promised. These religious Rites we call Sacraments: fo that in short our Church most fully and plainly defines a Sacrament to be, An outward and visible sign [or token] of an inward and spiritual grace given for thereby conveyed unto us 1, ordained by Christ himself [so that it is not in the power of man or of the Church to ordain Sacraments] as a means whereby we receive the fame (viz. whereby we receive the spiritual Grace, or Grace of Gods Spirit for the fanctification of our hearts, and Pardon of all our fins] and a pledge to assure us thereof, that is, of the faid Grace, in pardoning our fins, and continuing fuch les fanctifying Spirit unto us. Or shorter; a Sacrament is a Seal of the Covenant of Grace; (1.) on our Cc 2 parts

Chap. 6. dience, and (2.) on God's part of his giving unto us his Spirit, the pardon of our fins, all things good for us,

and finally eternal life.

Of these Sacraments we acknowledge but two (because Christ ordained no more, and no one ought to appoint Seals of the Covenant but he who made it.) The first whereof is Baprism, by which we vow obedience, and receive such grace and pardon as mentioned. This Vow of our Baptism, forasmuch as if we live to discretion, or active years, we through humane frailty and our own corruptions, and otherwise, break; there is a fecond Seal or Sacrament, namely, The Lord's Supper, unto which acknowledging our breaches of our former Vow, we are to come, and resume and renew our Vow; and God accordingly renews his promise of grace, and pardon, and eternal life unto us, and communicates further frength for the performance of what on our part concerns us. The outward figns are Bread and Wine, the

things fignified the Body and Blood of Christ: The breaking of the Bread typifies the breaking and rending of our Lord's Body on the Cross: the pouring out of the Wine the shedding his Blood in his Crucifixion. Nor are his Body and Blood hereby only signified, but also conveyed to the faithful soul. So those words of the Consecration assure us, This is my Body *. Not * See this Bread is my Body; but this Lib. 6. taking and eating is my Body; that Sed. last. is, (as the + Apostle St. Paul ex- + 1 Cor. pounds it) the Communion, or par- 10. 16. ticipation of my Body. This Bread and Wine being bleffed, and diffributed according to his command, God doth thereby as truly convey and give to every faithful Receiver the Body and Blood of Christ, that is, the crucified Saviour, as the Minister gives him those elements. As truly, I fay, he gives him the crucified Saviour, not bodily but effe-Etually: nor must we conceive the Body of our Saviour to move from

its place, or come out of Heaven; but his body and blood is given unChap. 7.

to us, and we receive them, (verily and indeed faith our Church) not in our mouths but souls, that is, we receive our Saviour as crucified, we receive our share of right in his body and blood, and all the effects, fowers, virtues, benefits, and fruits thereof, especially those before mentioned, of spiritual strength, and pardon, and eternal life.

By this plain view of the doctrine of the Lords Supper, I cannot but fee what I am to expect at the Lords Table, that is, I am prepared (in the Apostles language) to differn the Lords Body; and some light is given into what I must do by way of surther preparation; for being I am to renew my Covenant with heaven, it first concerns me to examine, how I have broken it.

CHAP. VII.

Of more proximate Preparation for the Lords Supper.

He particular and more immediate preparation for the Lords Supper, the Apostle calls Examining a mans self. And the first thing, whereof I am to examine I Cor. 11. my felf, is, Whether I have knowledge sufficient to discern the Lords body, that is, whether I understand the doctrine of it or no. If I do not, I ought to refrain till I have duly informed my felf; which I may not by any means long delay.

The next thing to be examined Falready fee to be, my sins, the breaches of my Covenant with God. Now my examination of my felf as to these, is only in order to the endeavour of godly forrow, and that in order to work repentance. And the particular practice of all

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Chap. 7.

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Cap. 6.

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thefe I have above considered: thither therefore I am to return, and in the order laid down there, to endeavour fincerely to fue out the pardon of my fins, (1.) considering them, and their aggravations, to move me to forrow & contrition for them; (2.) fludying how to mortifie (or break my felf of) the habits of them, (3.) resolving upon the use of fuch means as God directs me to; (4.) endeavouring, as far as possible, the making amends to any I have wronged; and to compleat all, (5.) betaking my felf to God in Prayer, by confessing and bemailing my feveral fins to him, by befeeching & depending upon him for pardon through the blood of Christ. All this I comprise under the name of Penitential Devotions: and as the examination of my felf naturally leads me hereunto, so is this a part of preparation most indispensably necessary for the Lords Supper, and for the performance of this, it is not to be thought an hour or two are sufficient. It is very necessary, that before my first approaching to the Lords Table,

Table, I have for a good space Tet up fuch a weekly course of humili- Chap. 7: ation of my felf, as hath been above Pr. Devot. confulted of, if my leifure and con- Part 4. dition of life will bear it. Then may I have particularly looked over my life, and understood my felf some considerable time beforehand, fo that I shall not have my repentance wholly to begin, but only to review, iterate and further compleat.

But if I cannot obtain of my felf or affairs fo much leifure for Devotion so long before, yet supposing I am now the first time to communicate, if I consider the work I have to do, I cannot well begin to think of examining my felf and beginning my Penitentials later, than a fortnight before my intended receiving: Not that my devotion must take up the whole time, but that, being feveral and frequent times in examination of my felf, and if possibly keeping three or four Fasting-days (at some distance one from another) for this purpose of particular viewing my C.C. S.

life, and distinctly considering, be-Chap. 7. wailing, confessing and resolving against my fins, I may be fure to have made thorough-work, to have repented of, and shut out of my foul all my known iniquities, and so be able with a clear conscience to approach this holy mystery. To this purpose (though I should commend it to all new Communicants, yet especially to such, who have less time and liberty for their devotion) do I commend Easter as the fittest time for first receiving, by reason of the foregoing Fasts of the Church; which whether all Families do observe, or no, it is certain that on some of them they are called to the publick Service of God, and particularly to confessions, and humiliation of themselves, and not fuffered (the whole days at least) to labour. And these Fasts and days of publick Prayers in Lent, if the new Communicant observe. and in the serious fear of God deal plainly with his own heart, he may well be supposed, by Good-Friday at night, to have in a good meafare

fore discharged the view of his life and Penitential Devotions. How- Chap. 7. ever I would fo cast it, that the Friday before that Lords day, on which I first communicate, I might have viewed and lamented the fum of my fins, and in my Saturday Devotions rather have my repentance to look over and more complete, than to begin, or a great part to do. Being then supposed to have examined my self, as to my knowledge, and as to my fins, and in my Penitentials to have endeavoured to make up all breaches between God and me, under which is comprised reconciling my felf to my offended neighbour (as before faid in the particular practice of repentance) the next matter of which I am to examine my felf, which should be my work on Saturday evening, is the present state and temper of my mind; whether is that fuch as is fit to bring to the Lords Table? Now, that I shall know hereby: is my heart tender and affectionete, disposed to those Christian graces which I am there to exercise? viz. L. To.

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1. To resentance, to relentings Grap. 7. for my fins, purpofes against them, and refolves of holy life?

> 2. To humble dependances, trust and hope in God through my Sa-

viours blood for pardon?

3. To spiritual thankfulness,

and holy joy?

4. To good will towards all men.

to charity and liberality?

If I find my felf disposed to these holy affections, I am in a fit temper to approach the Lords Table, If I find these dispositions wanting, I am (1.) Seriously to bewail it. (2.) To look over my former preparations; possibly those have been too flighty: some sin may yet lie unrepented of, which hardens my heart; and if any fuch I find, to repent of it particularly; if none fuch found, (3.) an affectionate and tender temper is to be endeavoured by Prayer, Reading, and Meditation, Especially, let me read and meditate the story of my Saviours passion, reflecting still on his Innocency, and my own Being of the mailty number, the punish-

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ment of all whose fins he bore. But if all will not melt my heart, it Chap being supposed that all my peni-tential devotions by way of preparation have been honeftly performed, let me not for this the hardpels of my heart forbear communicating; Pollibly the stone is for hard, nothing but my Saviours blood will foften it: To that therefore let me refolve to repair, vet not fo as to intermit the use of any means, and especially of frequent Prayer, to dispose my heart in that holy fort, and to those holy affections above-named, which I ought to carry with me to the Lords Table. And here, though to hit the condition of every foul be impossible, yet it may not be unprofitable to consider of such a form of preparatory Prayer as may be fit for me on the Saturday evening, and Sunday morning, before I communicate, to add to my former devotions (which are not by reason of my having been frequent in Prayer to be remitted, but rather intended.) And fuch an one is this, 101

Ghap. 7:

Father of Mercies, who. from the beginning hast been in Christ reconciling the World to thy felf, and to enfare as well as compleat this Reconciliation, haft called the faithful to the Communion of. the body and blood of him thy. Son, that true Passeover, who tafted death for every man. With what holy hands, and with how pure and heavenly an heart, ought I to receive this the food of life which comes. down from Heaven ? Yet, Lord. how vile and polluted am I .my very preparations need repentance, and my tears forrow. And besides the insufficiency of my repentance (which I befeech thee in the blood of Jesus to pardon) I have other miserable defects and distempers, which Lord, if thou wilt DOL

not remove, I am like to bring Chap. 7 with me to thy Table. An exceeding dull heart I carry, very far unbroken for my fins, unaffected too with that zeal of love and thankfulness towards thee, of charity and good-will towards Mankind, which I ought to bring thither with me. That Trust and Dependance which I exercise on thy Mercy in Christ, I have reason to fear may be too prefumptuous. But, Lord, thou knowest I have endeavoured to mourn over, and repent of my fins: I have vowed to have respect unto all thy Commandments, and not to regard any iniquity in my heart. These my vows of Holy life, I have ready to feal at thy Table. Oh that thou by the blood and spirit of thy Son wouldst feat me to the day of redemption, pardoning all my past sins, and

by the power of thy Grace, chap. 7 fecuring me from future backflidings. Make this bleffed Sacrament a feast of fat things unto my foul. Vouchfafe me thereby larger communications of grace and comfort than ever yet I received. And to that end, at present throughly wash me from the guilt of all my fins in the blood of my Saviour; from the guilt of all I know, and have confessed; and from the guilt of all my fe-cret and unknown transgreffions. O Lord, if there be any unfeen iniquity of mine, which is like to interpose and hinder good things from me, reveal and discover that to thy fervant, that by ferious repentance thereof he may obtain the washing of it away, and may draw near with a true beart, fprinkled from all evil con-

conscience. And, O good God, let thy Spirit go along with me, impowering me from above, and at those instants when I shall receive that bread of life and drink of that cup of the New Testament in my Saviours blood, let my heart so relent for all my fins, be fo inflamed with fervour of holy resolutions, of faith, love, gratitude, and most Christian Charity, that I may in nothing behave my felf unworthily: Hear, O Lord, and remember thy fervant for good, through that blood which he longs to be sprinkled and satisfied with. Amen.

One thing here let me admonish young Communicants of (youth being hor, and more ready to vow than faithful to pay) that they do not through imprudent zeal intangle themselves in too severe and inconsiderate



Chap. 7. All known fin must be resolved and vowed against : all known duty refolved for, and the endeavour of it, with utmost strengh, vowed: Yea, the means of avoiding and mortifying fin, (according as we have in our Christian prudence confulted of them) must be resolved on. But here we must be wary, that by particular vows against some matters in themselves innocent, we do not tie up our felves fo ftrictly from that liberty, which God hath left us (and we had better have fludied to have used Christianly than vowed totally to abridge our felves of) that we either repent afterwards, or prove unfaithful to our vows.

But to return. Having with some fuch Prayer as this above, closed up my evening Devotions, let me be very careful of my carriage afterwards, left I any wife diffurb fo much as I have obtained of a good temper. To this purpose, let me order all my next dayes affairs (especially if I have any com-

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mand or considerable service in a family) that my heart and hands receive as little disturbance or avocations by them as may be, which when I have done, let me chearfully commit my felf to sleep with all converient earliness.

And as it is my duty constantly. and ought ever to be my care (as being of most wholesom and comfortable influence) to fleep and wake with the thoughts of God fresh and nearest to my heart, so furely cannot I but think my felf concerned at present to close and open my waking eyes with Divine thoughts and ejaculations : which if I do, I am now devoutly come to the morning of that day, onwhich I hope to receive the Sun of Righteousness into my foul, everlastingly to enlighten, cherish, and in the end, glorifie it.

With convenient earliness then I rise, and applying my self seasonably to my Devotions, in my morning meditations, I shall find thus much new, requisite to be

added.

1. That

1. That I consider afresh (for I am not now supposed first to do that, if I have practifed the fore-going rules) how I may with due Devotion behave my felf at the Lords Table, and what are those particular duties and graces, which there I am to exercife (of which again in the following Chapter.)

2. That I fet apart and devote fomewhat to be offer'd to God at the Lords Table for the use of the Poor, or maintenance of those who are not otherwise provided for. It is evident by Apostolick order this ought not to be omitted.

1, 2. Comp. with

* 1 Cor. 16. On the first day of the week (viz. * when they assembled together to Acts 20.7. break bread) as I have given order to the Churches of Gatutia, so do ye. Let every one lay by him in store as God hath prospered you. And this was of old fo plentiful, that befides that it fufficed to make a feast, which they called a Feast of Charity, or of love, at which poor as well as rich, after the Lords

Jud. 12.

Supper, refresht themselves (and of of which we evidently read the abuse in 1 Cor. 11. 20, &c.) it relieved poor Christians, maintained the Ministry who were not otherwise provided for, and did many other publick goods. I ought not therefore either to do this too sparingly, or in any wise to omit it if able. I am further

3, To enquire afresh into the temper of my heart, and, endeavour to bring it to such due disposition

as before spoken of. And

Lastly, To add to my morning Prayers in private, some earnest petitions for the assistance of Gods Spirit, and a due frame of mind in participation of these holy Mysteries: in which case helps and directions have been above considered, and are to be used as I find it with my self.

If after all this done, I have any fpare time before my appearance in publick, I may well fpend it in reading over the Communion-Service, (which if a young Communicant, I may be conceived not much vers'd in) by which means I

fhall

Chap. 7.

of shall be able with more readiness. intelligence, and devotion to go along in it at the publick ministration. If I fufficiently understand this, the reading the Story of my Saviours Passion, and all along applying, and (as I ought ever when I read it) reflecting upon my felf, as being one of those guilty wretches, for whom he fuffered all this, and who upon my honest faith shall have my share in all the benefits and merits thereof, will be feafonable and profitable employment for those spare minutes and odd ends of time, which I have vacant.

Hitherto of the course of my preparatory devotions, supposing me now the first time a guest at the Lords Supper. My work will be much the same upon all my returns thereto: only, possibly I may not be able to spare, nor haply shall find it in such strictness necessary to spend, always so much time in the revising all my life, and particularly lamenting all my old sins upon every return to the Lords Table.

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Inafmuch as, if I am duly careful after my first receiving, I shall ob- Chap. 7. ferve some certain fixed time of calling my felf to account of my carriage, and humbling my felf for my miscarriages; and by that means be better verst in the particular knowledge of my ways, and keep all straighter between God and me. Notwithstanding, two days before my intended returning to the Lords Table it is very fit (though I am an old Communicant) I begin to think of preparing my felf: one of which days I should be fure to keep as a Fast, and that with fomething more than ordinary folemnity; touching which, and my penitential work thereon, consideration has been above had. And as touching the rest

of my preparations in bringing my fpiritinto a due temper, & disposing it to fuch Christian graces as I am to exercise at my receiving, I cannot be now at a loss after such particular consultation as hath been above entred, and is now proceeding

with.



CHAP.



CHAP. VIII.

Of Christian duties at the Lords Table.

T remains now that having duly prepared my felf in all the particulars above mentioned, (in none of which as I tender my foul and the benefits of worthy receiving, must I be careless) I consider so of my duties at this holy Table that no misbehaviour here render me unworthy.

* Pr. Dev. Part. 3. Cap. 8. Having devoutly (in the order * formerly propounded) gone through the foregoing service of God in the Church, (Prayers and Sermon) coming up now towards the Lords Table, I gravely take my place: and till the Assembly be all placed, it is far better for me to be upon my knees, and at my prayers, than to allow my eyes to gaze, and so my mind to wander.

But the Prayers beginning again, it is very improper for me to be at, Chap. 8. or proceed with any private prayers of mine own (which yet is too common, but a very indifcreet practice). Joyn I must with the Congregation, and particularly heeding every passage, put my heart thereto: And the contrary is reprehended as an intolerable diforder by the Apostle in the Corinthian Church: How is it (faith he) I Cor. 14. brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, &c. When one is finging, another is minding exhortations; another prayers, &c. Let all things be done to edifying: this then he thought an unedifying course: Yea, not only as to all the words and fubstance of the prayers and exhortations going before the Confecration of the Elements, but even to every passage and particular Ceremony in the confecration, let me, as neer as I can, keep my mind attentive; forasmuch as all of them have their meaning and reason, and do tend to edifica-Dd. tion.

tion. Particularly the Sacramen-Chap. 8. tal actions on the part of the Minister, to be by me heeded and understood, are

I. Taking of the bread and taking of the cup, both used by our Lord, which are nothing else but a folemn separation of the Bread and Wine from common and ordi-

Exod. 12. nary use. Thus was the Lamb to

3. be taken out, fet apart from the Flock, And that which is fignified hereby is Gods eternal fetting apart and destinating the Lord Christ to this office of being our Saviour; in refpect of which, he is called the

Rev. 13. 8. Lamb, flain from the foundation of the world.

> 2. The bleffing the Bread and Wine, represents God the Father, fanctifying and furnishing our Lord Christ, as to his humane nature, with all gifts necessary for the difcharge of the office of our Redeemer: his bleffing him with the Spirit above measure.

> Of the breaking of the Bread, and pouring out of the Wine, the fignification is obvious and above touched. 3. The

3. The Bread and Wine thus ta- 1 ken, and blest, broken, and poured Chap. sout, are distributed to each by the Minister. The giving of them denotes Gods giving Christ, and Christs giving himself to us; and the particular distribution of them to each, the particular respect had of each, and the particular application of Christ unto each; and not of a piece of Christ to one, or a piece to the other, but unto each of the whole Crucified Christ, all the benefits and virtues of his Death and Passion. And further, As the Bread and Wine are not only given to us, but given to us with this design, that we eat the one and drink the other, so doth God give the crucified Saviour to us at present, whose Flesh is meat Joh. 6. 55 indeed, and his blood drink indeed, for the spiritual nourishment of our fouls and growth in Grace. These are the Sacramental actions on the part of the Minister: Others there are on the receivers part; to wit, their taking and eating, and taking and drinking. Their taking, figni-Dd 2 fies

fies their particular laying hold on Chap. 8. Christ by choice, trust and faith, their flying to, and apprehending him, as the means of their falvation, and of the pardon of their fins, and their dependance on him accord ngly. Their eating and drinking fignifies the close and intimate union of them to Christ; for as our meat passes into our substance, and is most intimately united to us, fo are we hereby fealed and made, as it were, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone.

All these matters ought I to be meditating, according as every particular gives me proper occasion, and the attending unto every particular passage, is that which is the proper devotion at this time required of me. Not fo, but that I may ard ought in the intervals of the office, to fend up many ejaculations to God intermixt with these meditations, which I shall have the best opportunities for, while the Communion is administring to others. Then especially, if there be no Pfalm finging, I may well recollect

my vows & resolutions of Holiness, which in my private humiliations of my felf I have made and beg Divine grace, to enable me to keep them; and otherwise address my felf to God, as my Christian prudence and devotion shall suggest. But certainly to fpend my time purely in private prayer, fo as in their feafon not to attend to thefe Sacramental actions, or the chief of them at least, is very improper and diforderly.

In these exercises of my devotion in this order and method, am I supposed to wait till it comes to my turn to receive the Holy Bread, which when I receive, and am now feeding on, I employ my foul in fome fuch ejaculations as this.

Be it unto thy servant O Lord according to thy word.

Bless thee, O Father, for my Saviour and Lord, the Holy Jesus, I adore thee, O Lord Christ, with thine eternal Spirit, Dd 3

I acknowledg and believe thy Chap. 8. body to have been crucified and broken by thy Father's wrath for me; befeeching thee that through the same, this body of mine may be sealed to an holy and eternal life; and withal, devoting my felf to thee by folemn vow, (which by eating here at thy Table, according to thy command, I feal) with all my foul and ftrength to serve thee all my days. Let thy grace, O Lord, be sufficient for me.

> When I have now eaten, and during such eating, thus applied my felf to God, it may possibly fo come to pass, that the generality of the Assembly is singing: if therefore the Pfalm be pertinent and sense (for it is to be lamented many which are fung in the Church are scarcely so) it is meet I joyn with them: if it be not, I fee not how I can joyn with them any further, than by praising God in my mind, by

by meditating in fuch pertinent fense as possibly the translators of Chap. 8. the Pfalms have corrupted. I am fure God requires me not to praise him in what is not fense, or so pitiful that my judgment cannot attend to, but nauseate: nor doth our Church enjoyn it, the Metrical translations of the Pfalms being only allowed and tolerated, not at all imposed. I say therefore, I must be fure to employ my foul in feafonable holy Meditations of Christs fufferings, the benefits thereof, of my union with Christ by this Sacrament, or the like : and thus meditating, wait till it comes to my turn to drink of that holy Cup: which when I take into my hand, that verse of the Pfalm may well run in my mind, I will take the cup of salvation, and call on the name of the Lord: and, as far as I can, while I drink, however, most furely when I have drunk thereof, let me fomewhat more at large lift up my foul to God in some such fort as before.

Lord

Chap. 8.

Lord let the Blood of Jesus cleanse and Sanctisse me from all Sin.

After this I pause a while, reflecting a moment or two, how all has passed over with me, inwardly exercising an humble confidence or hope that God accepts me, sprinkled with my Saviours Blood, and that he does and will perform his promise of Pardon, Grace and Glory: and then as I find occasion or have opportunity, I add,

Bless thee, O Almighty Father, O crucified Saviour, O fanctifying Spirit, that my foul is thus refreshed. I acknowledge and believe thy blood, O Holy Jesus, to have been shed for my fins; let it rest on me for remission of them, and therein let all fins be washt away, and I sprinkled from all evil conscience. Being now made

made clean, O, that I may fin Chap. 8. no more!

18 n

Having thus received, in case of fuch Pfalm fung, as before allowable, I joyn therein; otherwise I employ my devotion as I did after my partaking of the bread, till all having received, the Church prayers afterwards begin; in which with the utmost fervency of my spirit, I praise and petition God. And though I should not, before these have * sung an hymn, yet do Matth. 26not I depart from the Lords Ta- 30. ble without a very Seraphical hymn, if I devoutly joyn in the Church prayers: for fuch is that which is fung or faid after the administration, Glory be to God on high, &c.

Before I depart from the Lords Table, I must be sure to make my offerings (it ought to be indeed regularly in all Congregations, and is in many done foon upon the Peoples addressing themselves to Communicate). I mean, to leave somewhat for the refreshing of the poor, as a pledge of my gratitude

Dd 5 to

to him, who hath thus fed my Chap. 8. hungring and thirsty foul. Having thus done, I depart, prayers being ended, with a ferious and chearful heart, and countenance; I keep good thoughts in my mind, yet pass not so reserved, but that I cheerfully falute any of my Christian brethren, as I have occasion; remembring in the ancient Church, the Assemblies, especially after every Communion, parted with an Holy kifs. Very seasonable may it be, and a right charitable imitation of the old feafts of Love, to invite any poor communicants home to my Table, if I have one; for home now I haften.

CHAP

CHAP. IX.

Of duties more immediately and remotely following the reception of the Lords Supper.

A N D when I am now come home, I forthwith retire to my privacy for a small space, where my business is Inquiry into my self and suitable address to Heaven.

Two or three things there are, touching which, I cannot but think my self obliged to enquire; (1.) Touching my own behaviour, both at the Lords Table, and since my immediate departure thence. Was I so attentive and devout, as I resolved and prayed I might be? Or was I heedle s in many points, and generally dull and unaffected? And since I came from those devotions, have I not by indulging wandring thoughts, or vain and worldly discourse, already

Chap. 9.

dy lost much of the benefit I obtained? (2.) How fucceeded all between Heaven and me? What found I of the quickening or comforting influence of the Holy Ghost? This is that, which they, who mean any thing intelligible thereby, mean by Communion with God, confifting in nothing else but a mutual entercourse of action, between the mind of man worshipping God in Faith, Love, and fuch like acts of adhefion, and God enlivening and affecling it, with the assurance of hope, with holy joys, and a fense of his acceptation, love and favour. The mind flies out to him by Heavenly temper, thoughts and desires, and he by his spirit not only heightens that devotion, but fills the mind with hopes and confidences, that its devotion and it felf are accepted, and with joys thence conceived; which, according to the devotion of the mind, are higher or more moderate, sometimes unspeakable and full of Glory. Touching this fuccess, I say, I must enquire, and if upon enquiry made, I find niy

my felf to have been dull, and to have felt little or nothing either Chap- 9.1 of the quickenings or joys of the Holy Spirit, I am (3.) to examine the cause, for undoubtedly it lies on my fide; I was either flighty in my preparations, or heedless in my participation, or else there is some other distemper in mine heart (perhaps yet unfeen by me) which caufeth God to keep at a distance, and as it were eftrange himself. Suitable to what I find concerning my carriage, faccess, and prefent state, should be my address to Heaven; which (though haply, by reason of common affairs, necessarily somewhat, brief, yet,) ought to be as affectionate as may be. Possibly, the following form may not be unfit (if for use, yet not) for direction.

MY foul and all within me bleffeth thee, O Lord my God, for that bread of life, and cop of falvation from which I now come. What am I that thou

thou shouldst feed me from Chap. 9. Heaven, and assume me into fo intimate an union with thine Eternal Son ? I, who have transgressed all thy Laws, abufed thy Mercies, flighted thy Judgments; I, who have refused thy Calls, refisted thy Spirit, broken all my former Covenants with thee: what am I that thou shouldst thus readmit me into so high favour? It is, O Lord, because thy Mercy is above all thy Works, and the riches of thy Grace most inexhaustible: that Mercy and Grace I adore, I admire; Oh, that I may Eternally magnifie! Nothing is there, Lord in me, but what may provoke thy wrath, and hinder my happiness. How * gross was my unpreparedness for thy Table? How many the * wanderings, and how * great Horlt the

the dulness of my heart, even chap. 9. under my nearest approaches to thee there? These may justly hide thy face from me. And I cannot but bless thee, that thou hast not more estranged thy felf, and instead of hopes of thy favour, feat me home with a fense of thy wrath. But, Lord, though I am not worthy [* and have not tasted so highly] * Such exof those joys and comforts, of pressions as that hidden Manna, which thy to be used, choice and holier Servants tafte, as they are yet vouchfafe me this benefit found to by the communion of the Body the particuand Blood of thy Son, that I lar conditimay receive such grace and per- worshipper. petuated influences of thy Spirit, as may enable me to perform unto thee all my vows; fo that I never, by revolting. into any known fin, unhallow this foul and body of mine, which the Body and Blood of thy

thefe, are



thy Son hath this day fancti-fied; but denying ungodliness and worldly lufts, may live foberly, righteoufly, and godlily in this present world, and in that to come, obtain a bleffed refurrection, and fome (though any mean) share of an inheritance with thy Saints in light, through the merits of my crucified Saviour, Amen.

> Having in some such fort, suitably to my condition, addrest my felf to God, I have closed for the present my Communion-devotions. and it only remains, that in all my ways hereafter, I remember my renewed Covenant, as judging it grievous to violate any one Article of what I have fealed in my Saviour's blood, and to have that abused blood (through which only I can have pardon) to be a witness against me. It is certain, that confequent unworthiness (that is, behaving our felves unworthy, forgetful

getful, and regardless of the Body and Blood of Christ, after we have Chap. 9 partaked thereof) is most dangerous: for he, who after his partaking shall from his heart endeawour to live worthy, was not, undoubtedly, an unworthy Communicant; so that future fidelity to my engagements, I cannot but look upon as the most critical point, which constitutes me a worthy receiver. This therefore I must daily mind, and with all my might endeavour; and very much conducing hereunto I shall find these practices.

1. That I frequently recollect my engagements and vows to God. to the end forgetfulness betray me not to the breach of them. To this purpose it were very well, if (according to some former Propofals) I kept them in

writing.

2. That I carefully maintain a constant course of daily devotion, (fuch as above described) and be fure therein to imploy my heart as well as lips; and, if possible, dai-



ly, at least frequently, examine my Chap. 9. Confcience. This will keep in my heart a fense and fear of God, and besides, derive his grace and blef-

fing on me.

3. That I carefully watch and provide against, and endeavour throughly to mortifie that fin or fins, to which my natural conftitution or course of living is most apt to betray me, and by which I have formerly most foully fallen. Hence is the greatest danger to be feared: here therefore should be kept the strongest guard.

CHAP. X.

Whether a Christian may not worthily communicate without observation in strictness of the former Method. Some reflections on dying mens communicating, and conclusion of all.

A tion of worthy receiving the Lord's Supper, the rules laid down being stricter than what most observe, it may possibly be demanded whether a Christian may not communicate worthily, although he should not observe all these rules, especially as to the strictness of preparation, and the quantity of time to be spent therein.

In answer whereunto it must be Premised, (1.) That the spiritual estates and ordinary lives of men are various. The generality of men spend very little time in daily

daily private devotion. And even Chap. 10. all those, that accustom themselves to daily private Prayer, use not haply much to examine their own hearts, and take a daily account of their walkings, fo as to confess, and fue for pardon, for every fin they fee themselves that day to have fallen into. Others on the contrary fide maintain generally fuch strictness in their private devotions daily. And again (2.) There is difference between coming occasionally a guest to the Lord's Table, when I did not long before intend it, and coming in my ordinary course, when I had a weeks notice of it, and intended to come fo long before. Occasional communicating I call that, when being abroad on a Lord's day, or some like folemn day, I come into a Congregation by me well enough known, and there find the Table prepared, and hear all, who are fit to be guests, there present invited to it: or, when being in the Family with some dying or decrepitly infirm parson, I am invited upon

upon short warning, to make one of that number which are to com- Chap. 10. municate with him.

Now for fatisfaction to the cafe put, I fay, it being supposed I am a person who maintain such a strict course of daily private devotion, as above described, it cannot be, but that I am well acquainted with my own heart and ways: and there can be little on my conscience to detain me from the Lord's Table. In such a case then it is evident I carry about with me, in a manner, an habitual preparation. If therefore I, by a short meditation (to which purpose, in case there be any tolerable convenience, I retire, otherwise, I call my foul as as it were into private, and commune with mine own heart) if I fay by a short meditation I look into my felf, and finding nothing but that my breast is clear, after fome brief address secretly to God to dispose my heart for what I intend, I may undoubtedly approach the Lord's Table in an acceptable fort: provided I omit nothing of the

Chap. 10.

the strictness of that care which I am to take in the act of receiving. nor, of after-fidelity. And indeed I do not know, did men live fo Christianly as they should, how a Christian can as I said before. turn his back upon the Lord's Supper, whenfoever he hath conveniencies for it, without a finful neglect. And if men do not live fo Christianly as they should, I think no one will doubt, but that again is a fin: fo that generally the turning my back upon the Communion, except it be to leave room for others, or because some other Christian duties at that time call for me, must be concluded sinful; and finful it is too not to live in fuch an habitual preparation, that, upon occasion, after some, communing with my own heart, I could not fafely approach thereunto.

But it must be remembred, this is only allowable in grown Christians, and men of strict devotionals; and in these two, rather in their occasional, than set and long intended

intended communicating. To others, or to these in their ordinary course of receiving in their own Church, I scarce can judg the former directions of inquiring into themselves a day or two before hand, of fasting and humbling themselves, and taking pains duly to dispose their hearts to the highest pitch of devotion, may be omitted without sin.

o do

Touching what devotions will concern a dying man in order to his communicating, it may not be unexpedient to add fomewhat; but I had rather confult more generally, touching what preparations for death that man should make, who had formerly in his life for a good space observed the course proposed, both in the foregoing tract of devotion, and this of communicating.

And for a conclusion to the whole, and by way of commendation of this Method to the practice of all who read it: I will say that in case a man have carefully and conscientiously practised the

fore-



foregoing Method, whether he be taken on a fudden by death (from which fudden death I never thought it improper to fay with our Church, Good Lord deliver us) or more flowly fummoned and conveighed to his Grave by difease; he hath I ttle to do by way of preparation for death, but to continue his for-

mer practice.

Sudden death allows little time. but to call somewhat generally for Mercy and Pardon, and with forrow (as particular as may be) for fin, to caft my felf on God through Christ. Death, when it gives warning, calls me to the fullest and strictest practice of repentance and faith I can, which has been before considered. This then, if I have before conscientiously practifed, home to the time when difease or other accident summons me, I am an happy man; for I have little work to do, but to beg my fincere repentance may be accepted, and to reft in a comfortable hope, that through my 'Saviour's merits it will be. This hope often fled unta WIL

will overcome the derivours of death. In tale my distate te any whit him Chap. 100 gring, the reviewing and making fure my repentance is of irrefrages ble necessity a new should I by any means onne the Communion.

But before my participation thereof (Supposing my disease, A fay, to patient) I would if postibly; fet my bonfe in order, that is dispose of my Estate, Concerns, and Trusts, and in dispoling here of, if I have it, it behaves me to give with due beraliny to the poor, no then alive having been to just a Seeward, but he hath need by gratifying the poor, to obtain their prayers and bleffing, that his masting his Lord's Goods, may not hin- Luk. 16.5. der his being received into the Erevialting Habitations of blife

This work of diffoling my Blues though it should not begin my more immediate preparation for death, (renewings of my repenrance, being foppoled first of all to take up only mind) yet ought co be early disparehed, in as much



as my mind will be freer for Divine contemplation and devotion, when I have taken leave of worldly business.

This then being over, I, more folemnly I fay than ever (as far as my power admits) revise my repentance, cast over the sins of my life, beg pardon through Christ, and so prepare my self (as formerly in my health) for this closing spiritual Meal of my Lords last Supper. In this case, I must by no means neglect to confult with some Spiritual Guide, to whom if I have nothing to unburthen my felf of, yet I apply my felf to, to receive absolution: the express words and commission of our Saviour, and the constant practice of the Church, being an irrefragable proof that there is weight in that matter, though not fo much as fome pretend.

John 20.

Having therefore fet all, as far as I can, streight not only in my own judgment, but in the judgment of that Minister with whom become

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fult; it is fit (all meet circumstances admitting it) I proceed to Chap. 10. partake of the Lord's Supper, before which according to the order of the Church, I receive abfolution. I have here little or nothing purely new being to proceed by my former rules; only I am to endeavour to raise my devotion to the highest pitch.

The whole office being over, in Divine and Heavenly thoughts, difcourses and prayers, should In as comfortably and gladly as I can, await my diffolution. During this expectancy, and possibly again, as near my dying moment as I can, should Is folemnly commend: all mine to God. by invoking the blessing of God on them, and counfelling them the best I can to virtue; and above all, I would press the serious practice of Religion upon them. (Mens dying words flick longest, and he is firongly Atheistical, who will not be moved with a dying mans afferting and urging the reality of Religion.) Thus, Lord, Ee 2 · Ashiola

Lord, if thou pleasist, grant I may

Chap. 10. fout up my days !

To conclude, Know, good Reader, who lives well, is generally prepared for death. Who comes to the Lord's Table otherwise propared, than he would go out of the world, is not prepared to the degree he should be; which Do-Strine if duly confidered mould not deter or detain men from, but exente them to frequent communicatingt for thus they will live con-Ranthy prepared for death; which is certainly the most blessed life.

The former Treatife of Devotis on, if truly practifed, leads to an hon ly andfrict life: the present to due preparation for the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ; so that he who will addict himfelf heartily to this practice, will undoubtedly prove an holy perfon, will live prepared for all which can befall him, even death it felf and him, whom fuch an happiness, as to be a real Saint, ready to pais hence into Eternity of bleffedblessedness, free from all harms, chap to dangers, and fears forever, will not move to a practice, in it self so amiable, so pleasant, so advantageous, I can only say, The Lord have mercy on: but he hath nothing in himself save his misery, to commend him to that mercy: And whether his guiltiness will not obstruct mercy, let him look; I should not dare to run such hazard.

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TABLE

OF THE

CONTENTS.

CHAP. I.

A Proposition of the particular matters to be treated of in this discourse.

Chap. 2. Considerations to move to frequent the Lord's Sup-

per.

Chap. 3. How often a Christian ought to partake of the Lord's Supper, and at what age to

begin.

Chap. 4. Considerations to move to such care and seriousness in receiving, as that we may receive worthily. Chap.

The Table.

Chap. 5. In what points that

care confifts.

Chap. 6. Of more remote preparation. The doctrine of the Lord's Supper briefly opened.

Chap. 7. Of More proximate preparation for the Lord's Supper. Directions to Prayer before it.

Chap. 8. Of Christian Duties at

the Lord's Table.

Chap. 9. Of Duries more immediately and removely following

the Lord's Supper.

Chap. 10. Whether a Christian may not worthily communicate without observation in firstiness of the former method. Considerations on a dying mans communicating, and the conclusion of the whole by restestions on death.

FINIS.

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